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THE STORM FLOWER.

BY W. M.

You're here and yet blooming fair flower,
While companions of summer all sleep,
Tho' swept by chill winter's fell shower,
A visage serene you still keep.

Ah, graceful brave bloom you remind us
Of a flower like soul who may show,
In her life like to yours we may find us
The source of a smile amid woe,

As you she has seen brighter skies,
Many friends of life's summer are fled;
Fond hopes of her bosom likewise,
Yet leaving no gloom in their stead.

Her heart tho', in silence it grieve,
Has a solace if it only may show
Its love as it strives to relieve
And lighten life's burden or woe.

I dream her blest bosom resigned,
Is the secret, sweet bud of your grace,
With sister content well combined,
How they drive away gloom from the face.

Brave soul and sweet flower you show
That the proud restless world needs be told
A spirit resigned can bestow
A peace of more value than gold.

SO NEARLY LOST.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A MODEL GIRL," "A LITTLE VIRAGO," "LADYBIRD," "WILFUL BAB," ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

STILL, he was admitted that afternoon, as he expected to be, and the girl rose from the little couch in the sitting room to greet him. She was paler, and seemed taller than before her illness, the man thought; but perhaps that was because she was slighter. Her face was grave, and the hand she gave him was cold.

"You are better?" he asked gently, beginning just as he had intended to do. "You do not feel so very ill now, do you? Sit down, please; I cannot bear that you should stand, as if I were some great stranger that you were receiving formally."

Miss Terry did as she was bidden.

"You are really better?" Mr. Carr asked once more. He could think of nothing better to say.

"I am nearly well," Diana told him, "and am going back to town in a day or two. I am anxious to begin word again."

"But you must not be in too great a hurry," he said. "You know the more haste the less speed in some cases. Besides"—he hesitated—"you received my letter, I suppose?"

"Yes—this morning," she replied coldly; but Mr. Carr noticed a tinge of color in her cheeks.

"We are to have our conversation now," he continued, trying to feel at his ease and comfortable. "After all," he thought reassuringly, "she is sure to be pleased, for it is entirely for her sake that I am going to offer to marry her. She is such a dear little thing, I cannot bear to see her unhappy. Can you guess what it is about?" he asked aloud.

Diana's cheeks reddened; but she only answered—

"I am not good at riddles."

"Then I will tell you," he said, trying to smile. He was dreadfully conscious of his want of self-possession, and felt more awkward than he had ever done in his life.

He had not expected that his task would be so difficult. "I think you must have wondered that I have been in no hurry to get back to America?" he ventured, more in the shape of a question; but, as Diana did not answer, he proceeded—

"Of cour-e I could not go away and leave you while you were so ill; I—I should have been miserable about you."

"You are very good," Diana remarked quietly.

"And, besides that, I—I was anxious to tell you something," he blundered on, growing hotter and more conscious of the fact that he was becoming more ridiculous every moment. "I have been thinking that—that I should miss you very much."

He glanced at her then to see if the blushed and looked conscious. If she did, he could take her in his arms, and everything would be make quite easy. But the girl was as grave, pale, and composed as ever.

"Would you miss me—if I went?" he stammered, trying to take her hand.

"I dare say I should do so," Diana answered calmly. "But, when one is very busy—as I hope to be—one has not very much time to notice the absence of people."

Something in her voice and mien struck him with sudden dismay. Was it possible that he had been wrong, and that Miss Terry did not love him after all? But no—he had not dreamed those kisses.

"Diana, will you marry me?" he asked, with a swift change of manner, his voice being now eager and pleading. He noticed it himself, and was surprised.

"No, I thank you!"

Had she really said it? No—his ears had not deceived him!

"Why won't you?" he asked, and his voice had an aggrieved tone. "How have I displeased you?"

"It is not necessary that one should be displeased with a man because one does not wish to marry him," she replied composedly.

"Do you—do you think I am in love with—with—Miss Wallace still?" he inquired.

"You were very much in love with her a month ago—when we last met."

"But she won't have me; I told you so," the young fellow blurted out; and then Diana was guilty of a cruel remark.

"Never mind! I dare say some other woman will, if you keep on asking."

"So that is what you think of me!" he exclaimed, getting on his feet and looking wrathful enough. "Well, I suppose I have given you the chance of saying a kind thing of that sort, and you have availed yourself of it. But, whatever you choose to think, I tell you this solemnly—that, if you refuse to marry me, I shall never ask another woman as long as I live!"

"Don't say anything rash!" Diana advised him. "You are very young still, and——"

"I am five years older than you, at any rate!" he cried. "I—I can't understand you, Diana. You, who have always been so kind to me, treating me like this! And I thought you loved me!"

He brought out the last words in a tone of deep reproach, but the next instant he regretted having uttered them. Perhaps he felt the more sorry when Diana rose slowly and confronted him, her eyes aglow in her pale face. But he did not quail beneath the utter scorn of her look; he had meant well, though he made such an awful muddle of it, and he was strong in his integrity of purpose if in nothing else.

"You thought I loved you!" Diana repeated slowly. "And so you were kind enough to come to offer me marriage out of pity. I am very grateful to you!"

He hung his head for an instant, but a moment after he braced himself to make a clean breast of everything.

"Please listen! It wasn't that," he said, looking at the girl straight in the eyes. "I should have been very grateful to you if you would have married me; and I did think—yes, I did—that you would like—I mean, not dislike exactly—— But you know what I mean, though I am such an ass that for the life of me I cannot manage to find the proper words. I like you better than any one I ever saw—except her"—with a slight lowering of the voice—"and perhaps I shall get even over that in time."

He held out this inducement, as a child holds out its cake, to make peace. But Diana was not dazzled by the brilliant hope the words suggested.

"Then you can go away and survive the loss of me," she told him scornfully. "Let me see—it is six weeks since you proposed to Miss Wallace; then you won't be in mourning more than a fortnight for me."

She gave a little rippling laugh which irritated him; it stung him beyond endurance and drove him into asserting himself. In spite of her gleaming eyes he took a step nearer and laid his hand lightly upon her arm.

"Then you don't love me?" he asked.

"I hate you at this moment!" she answered fiercely. "In a fortnight I dare say I shall have got over that feeling and be indifferent."

"And you never have loved me?" he said. But though his words were in the form of a question, his glance asserted boldly, "You did—you did—and you know it!"

With sudden force the memory of that last time when they were alone together—when he had lain like one dead in her arms—rushed over her, and the denial froze on her lips.

"You do love me!" he cried eagerly and triumphantly. "Diana, my darling, then why not accept me?" He did not know how eager his own wooing had grown. He only realised that the one thing he most wished for, and had reckoned on as being his own, was slipping from his grasp, and he made a desperate effort to retain it.

At the sound of those two words—"my darling"—the girl's face grew even paler than before. She shrank away farther from him, and put up her hands tremblingly, as if to ward off some attack.

He would have followed up what seemed to be an advantage but for the expression of shrinking pain on her face.

"Diana, speak to me!" he pleaded; but she could not, so it seemed, for, though her lips moved, no sound came.

"Darling, why are you so cruel to us both?" he asked.

Then at last she found her voice.

"I am kind," she said hoarsely—"kind to you, but kindest to myself. Do you think that I could bear it? Think what you are asking me to be—a wife who knows that her husband's whole love had been given for once and for ever to another woman. Hush! You said that yourself. You said it was 'once and for ever' that you loved, and that was only a month ago. You said I was like a sister to you then. Now you have changed your mind all of a sudden, and you ask me to be your wife, and the reason you give is that I love you! Yes, yes—you did say it—if not in words, in looks! And it is true!" She raised her head, and seemed to grow taller with the confession. She was not ashamed of her love.

Mr. Carr, looking at her, held his breath in wonder as to what would come next.

"It is true," she replied, "And for that reason, if for no other, I will never marry you. I wonder, if I did, which of the two of us would be the more wretched? But I think I could predict. The woman always suffers the more. The man endures for a time, and then escapes from the home when he can bear the wretchedness there no longer."

"But why should we be wretched?" he asked, somewhat bewildered. "You own you love me, and you know my feeling for you. Yes—I will say it"—as she put her hand up with a little gesture that half implored, half commanded his silence—"I like you better than any woman I ever saw—I say 'like,' mind! And liking goes a long way towards loving. I like the things you do and the things you say, and the way you do them and say them. And I shall be very happy, I feel quite sure, if you will marry me. I shall be happier and happier as time rolls on, I thoroughly believe—I am sure of it—and so will you be. You will learn to trust me, Diana, and to——" But she put her fingers in her ears and was facing him. He could not say any more; for of what use is it making love to a woman who proceeds to stop up her ears?

When he was silent, Diana began to speak.

"You don't understand in the least," she commenced. "But I will explain it all to you simply and clearly, because after today we shall probably never see one another again. You will go to your New World, and I shall stop in the old one. But I don't wish you to regard me as unreasonable or childish, or to blame me more than you can help—that is, if you ever do think of me. Very well, then"—as she saw a look of indignation rise to his face—"when you do think of me. You fancy we should be happy together, but I know that we should be miserable, and I will tell you why. Because I do love you! If I did not—if I simply liked you, as you say, then we could get on together very well. Whatever you did or did not do would not matter much to a wife who simply liked you. But I should love you so that you, not loving me, would grow to hate me in a month," she continued. "I should follow you about, and be jealous if you spoke to another woman. Do not look at me like that! I will not marry you, so that it will never be your fate or mine to bear all this. Then, if you were silent and lost in thought, I should think that you were dreaming of her; and, because you could not love me as I love you, I should torture and sting you till you hated me. I would do it! I think I would rather you hated me now than that you—liked me. Now what do you think of me?"

"I think that you are weak and ill, and that you say more than you can possibly mean; but I am glad that you love me—glad and grateful—and I ask you again to marry me."

"I will not!" she replied curtly. "Never—though you stayed here for ever! Can't you understand that by the words I have just uttered I have made it impossible, even if it was not before? Please go! I beg you to leave me. I shall have to cry soon; I am not strong yet, and I would rather be alone. Give me your hand, and go! Remember that I have not done all these dreadful things; I have only talked of them. We have always been good friends, have we not?"

"The best of friends," he admitted huskily, as he held out his hand to her.

"And, when you have departed, I shall forget this afternoon, and so will you," she said, with a confidence she did not feel.

But Mr. Carr only answered dully—

"Good-bye, and Heaven keep you always! Bear in mind that you send me away from you."

* * * * * *

"So our young American friend has returned to his native wilds?" Mr. Irwine said, with a questioning look into Diana's

averted face. "His foot is on his native heath, and his name is 'MacGregor'—eh?"

"If it is, he never mentioned the fact," the girl returned, with an attempt at a smile. "But Mr. Carr has gone. I suppose you mean him?"

Mr. Irwine inclined his head slightly in token of assent.

"And you are going to become the tenant of the house that you yourself decorated?" he asked. "Is that really arranged?"

"I think so," she replied, resting her chin upon her hand, as if she were very tired and very thoughtful at the same time. "You see, he is kind enough to let me have it for the same rent as this place, and of course it will be, as he says, a good advertisement for me. And I shall look after the house for him, and see that it does not go to ruin, as many places have such an unpleasant knack of doing."

"And he will come back to look after it, and you?" Mr. Irwine suggested, merrily. "But that is—of course——. When shall we see him again, do you think?"

"He will never return," Diana answered, slowly.

And, though she did not sigh or hang her proud head, there was a peculiar inflection in her words that touched her hearer.

"England has not been a very happy place for him, and he is not likely to come back to it."

"Then that is your doing!" the old man cried, with sudden energy. "You have sent him away, you cruel girl! And he was such a nice fellow, too! Why did you do it?"

"How do you know? Who said——" she began, confusedly. Then she made an effort to regain her composure.

"I am very good friends with Mr. Carr, and of course, I shall miss him; but I—I think, as his occupations all lie in California, he is better there. And man should have something definite to do."

"That is a truism. But this young woman—the other young woman, I mean—the one for whom the house was intended originally; wouldn't she have him?"

"No; he was disappointed," Diana replied.

Her face was now crimson.

"And then he came to you for comfort, and you wouldn't have him either?" the old man suggested, shrewdly. "Was that it? Ah, you need not answer me, for I can tell it was!"

"I never answer questions that people have no right to ask!" Diana remarked, a little haughtily.

"Well, you showed a proper spirit," Mr. Irwine observed. "Very right and commendable. Why should you take what another woman has left, even if that woman happens to be a goose, and incapable of seeing what a good, true heart Providence had laid in her way? No, no. You asserted your own dignity, and showed a spirit! Spirit is always a beautiful thing. So he has gone back to America, and we shall see no more of him?"

"Don't!" Diana exclaimed, warmly. "Why talk about him at all? What is it to do with you? If you have come this morning, as you said, to help me with that matter on which I am at work, let us begin and do something. If not——"

"I can go; eh?" Mr. Irwine queried, looking at her from under his knitted brows.

"Very well; we'll begin work, and I'll not say another word about anything that is likely to displease you. But tell me the name of the ship the lad went in. I should have been glad to see him once more before he went. I liked him from the first, though neither of you gave me much credit for it."

"He sailed in the Avoca," Diana replied, calmly.

"The Avoca!" the old man echoed, with a cry of horror.

In an instant they had both sprung to their feet as with a common impulse, and were standing staring into each other's face.

"What is it?" Diana demanded, hoarsely. It was hard to tell which face was the whiter, hers or his.

"What has happened? For Heaven's sake tell me quickly!"

"Don't you ever see the papers?" Mr. Irwine asked. "Haven't you been out and heard the news cried about the streets?"

"I know nothing, and have heard nothing!" Diana answered, almost inaudibly. "Tell me quickly, please!"

"The Avoca has met with—with bad weather," the old man stammered. "She is supposed to be—be——"

"What?" Diana questioned, excitedly.

"Lost, with all hands!" Mr. Irwine finished.

Then a perfect silence fell upon the room. The clock, ticking on the mantelpiece, became a voice full of doom, which reiterated harshly and stridently, at each tick:—

"Lost! He—is—dead! He—is—dead! You—did—it!"

Diana did not raise her face from her hands; did not speak or move; and the old man at length left her alone with her grief.

He tip-toed out of the room, as if there were someone lying dead in it; but the pulse of life was full and strong in Diana still—it was only her young heart that was broken.

* * * * * *

"Good gracious! Is it really you and not your double?"

It was old Mr. Irwine who was speaking, and his hand was clasped in that of a man whose warm grasp had at least nothing ghostly in it.

"Isn't it true about the Avoca, then? What lies people do tell, to be sure! Why, it has been in all the papers that she went down with every soul on board in last Friday's storm!"

"It was true," Mr. Carr answered—"or very nearly true. I don't think there were half a dozen saved beside myself. I was always a good swimmer, and I had the luck to get hold of a spar; but it was hours before I was picked up, and then it was a ship bound for London. So I am here again."

"Are you going to see Miss Terry?" Mr. Irwine asked.

"I think not. No; I shall not be here longer than I can help. I am already making arrangements for another voyage; I am in a hurry to get home."

"You might spare half an hour," the old gentleman persisted. "Yes; do now! Come round with me at once. She—the fact is, I told her of the loss of the Avoca, and it upset her a good deal. I am sure she would like to see you."

"But I do not wish to see her," Mr. Carr remarked diffidently. "You do not know all the circumstances."

Mr. Irwine wheeled round upon him sharply, and said:—

"I know more than you give me credit for, sir; and I say come!"

And the young man, with a gleam of hope on his face, which had been so sad but a few moments before, yielded.

"Diana, my dear," said Mr. Irwine, re-entering the room he had left fully an hour before, to find the girl still seated in the same listless attitude. "Diana, I am back to tell you another piece of news. I have just heard it—since I left you, in fact."

An intense silence prevailed.

"It's all owing to those confounded newspapers!" he burst out. "They will publish anything, I think, to cause a sensation."

Diana raised her head slowly.

"Was it true about the Avoca?"

"Well, partly—partly," replied the old gentleman, with a terrible dread at his heart that he might not be performing this delicate piece of work so cautiously as he might, for Diana might shriek or faint or have hysterics, and that without the least warning.

"The fact is," he continued, "the Avoca was wrecked, but there were survivors. Don't, my dear—now don't!"

The girl had slipped to her knees, and was beginning to cry at last; and Mr. Irwine wiped his own eyes sympathetically.

"Some of the men," he went on, "who could swim well, and had the luck to get hold of a spar, or something of that kind, were picked up; and—and, my dear child, don't, don't sob so—he is safe! He—he is here!"

The old gentleman was obliged to hurry on to the denouement, for the door behind Diana had opened softly, and Mr. Carr himself was there. A moment after he had his arms round the girl.

"Darling, don't cry; there is nothing to weep for now!" he exclaimed, as he kissed her tears away, and held her close to his breast.

"And yet, my own love, if I had not seen you breaking your heart for me, how could I ever have believed that you loved me so? You do love me, don't you?"

Diana's answer was lost in a long, passionate kiss.

Old Mr. Irwine shut the door quietly after him, and left the two who had been so nearly lost to one another alone with their ineffable bliss.

[THE END.]

HONEST and courageous people have very little to say about either their courage or their honesty. The sun has no need to boast of his brightness, nor the moon of her effulgence.

The Face on the Wall.

BY M. E. M.

IN that summer Major and Mrs. Crosbie returned from India and took a large house in one of the most lovely of the Yorkshire dales, on a three years' lease. It was a wild and solitary spot, but they particularly desired to live quietly in order to re-establish Major Crosbie's health, which had been much impaired by a long residence in the tropics; so that in their opinion, the isolated position of the house was no drawback.

The house, which faced due south, was a square three-storied edifice of gray stone; in front, a lovely lawn stretched away in a gentle slope to a brook which ran through the garden; east and west were two plantations of hoary weather-beaten pines, which on the west side sheltered a spacious kitchen garden, while on the east it stretched itself into an avenue of half-a-mile or more in length, at the end of which was the principal entrance.

Immediately behind the house was a large square yard, round which were built the stables and the various outbuildings, and at the back of these ran the high road, beyond which was a vast expanse of breezy heather-covered moorland.

Owing to its lonely position, the house had been uninhabited for many years; but, although showing signs of neglect, it was in pretty good repair, so that in a few months, under the energetic and artistic influence of the Crosbies, combined with a lavish expenditure of money, it had assumed a cheery and homelike appearance.

Such neighbors as they had soon called on them; but the distances between the different country houses was a very real barrier to any intimacies, more especially as winter sets in early in our northern counties and the roads are all bad.

Fortunately, the Crosbies were talented and accomplished people, with many resources in themselves, so that the lack of society did not trouble them so much as it might otherwise have done. Besides which the events which I am about to relate proved to be of most absorbing interest whilst they lasted.

That summer and autumn had passed rapidly away, and at the time my story begins it was the middle of November.

Mrs. Crosbie, a pretty little fair-haired woman, was sitting one evening after dinner with her feet on the fender-stool, plunged in a brown study; a dainty piece of silken embroidery lay neglected on the white bear rug at her feet in company with her fox-terrier Vic. Her elbow on her knee and her chin in her hand, she sat motionless, gazing at the fire, when the door opened and her husband came in.

"Why, Ethel, what are you thinking about?" he asked with a smile. "You are so preoccupied that you have forgotten my coffee."

"That is soon remedied," answered Mrs. Crosbie, stretching out her hand to the bell. "The fact is, I was debating whether I should tell you or not."

"Tell me what?" inquired Jack Crosbie, drawing an arm-chair to the fire and sinking into it lazily.

"Well, something rather queer that has happened the last two or three nights and that I can in no way account for."

"It sounds dreadfully mysterious," said her husband, smiling. "If it is anything very gruesome you had better not tell me, for fear of spoiling my night's rest."

Mrs. Crosbie smiled rather soberly, but did not at once answer.

The footman brought in the coffee, and while sipping it slowly, she said:

"If I could feel certain that it was merely imagination I should not say anything about it."

"Oh! never mind the if's," replied her husband somewhat impatiently. "Begin at the beginning, and say what is the matter."

"If you really want to know, then," said Mrs. Crosbie reluctantly, "for the last four or five nights I have been hearing voices!"

Her husband laughed. "What kind of voices?" he asked, "and when?"

"At night, when I am in bed," continued Ethel. "It is most extraordinary. Every night I hear two people talking in the smoking-room" (which was immediately beneath Mrs. Crosbie's bedroom).

"I can hear them quite distinctly, but I cannot distinguish any words. At first, I thought some of the servants must be sitting up talking in the kitchen, and had left the passage door open. I got up to see, but everything was quiet, and all the lights were out. As soon as I got back into bed the noise began again. Last night I got up three or four times, thinking each time I must have been mistaken, and that the maids were sitting up, but it was not so. It really does seem rather funny."

Major Crosbie smiled a little and said:

"You are sure you were not dreaming, Ethel?"

"Perfectly certain," replied Mrs. Crosbie. "Don't I tell you that I got up and walked about?"

"At what time do these mysterious voices begin?" asked her husband.

"At eleven o'clock; they go on for an hour and a half or thereabouts, and then they stop."

"Well, to-night I will bring a book and sit in your room, and if I hear anything I will go and investigate."

Mrs. Crosbie's bedroom opened into that of her husband on one side and into the passage on the other; the windows of both rooms looked out on to the lawn and were immediately above the smoking and dining rooms; they were all large and lofty square rooms which did not lend themselves structurally to any mystifications. At eleven o'clock Jack Crosbie entered his wife's room. He found her sitting in her dressing gown by the fire with a pink shaded reading lamp on a table at her side.

"How about the voices, so far?" he asked, as he sat down opposite to her.

"Oh! they have not begun yet," replied Mrs. Crosbie.

"And I don't suppose they ever will, save in your imagination," he replied.

"Well, we shall soon see," said his wife, smiling.

They chatted on indifferent subjects for a few minutes and then betook themselves to their respective books. Silence, unbroken save for the turning of the pages, reigned over the house; the wind sighed faintly in the pines, but all else was still, when, suddenly, a confused sound of voice broke out seemingly in one of the ground-floor rooms. Major Crosbie raised his head to listen and exclaimed:

"Why, my dear Ethel, if those are your mysterious voices, you are even more foolish than I thought you were; that is Janet apparently enjoying a somewhat noisy altercation with Wright on the stairs."

"You had better go and tell them to be quiet and send them off to bed," replied Mrs. Crosbie carelessly. "They will be coming up the back stairs."

Her husband left the room, and she sat watching the door with an amused smile on her lips. In a few minutes he returned looking slightly mystified.

"Well, did you tell them?" she asked with a laugh.

"They were not there at all," said Major Crosbie. "The lights are all out, and there is not a sound to be heard in the whole house."

"Well listen now," answered his wife.

They listened and again the confused murmur became perceptible; two voices seemed to be talking, arguing, entreating, threatening, and gradually rising in wrath till the climax of the discussion seemed to have been reached, and they relapsed into silence.

What was so curious and made the thing so uncanny was, that although the voices themselves were perfectly distinct, it was quite impossible to distinguish any words whatever. After an interval of about ten minutes, the whole thing began again. The Crosbies sat looking at one another in silence for some time; at last Mrs. Crosbie said in a half-whisper:

"Do you still think I am silly?"

"It is certainly very mysterious," replied her husband, "but it is absurd to fancy it is due to supernatural causes; there must be some reason for it. Most probably it is the wind forcing its way down some old chimney or pipe that we know nothing of.

"I will make a thorough investigation to-morrow; in the meanwhile, you had better go to bed, and if you are frightened, I will sit here till you get to sleep."

"Oh! I am not frightened,' replied Ethel, "but it is not nearly finished yet; it goes on at intervals like this for about an hour and a half. There it is again."

And as she spoke, the uncanny conversation was resumed; two voices seemed to be taking part in it; one, a woman's voice, soft and sweet, with agonising tones of entreaty, which at times became shrill and sharp with terror; the other, a man's voice, low, rough and husky, with cruel intonations and savage inflections.

What could they be talking about? was always the question present in Mrs. Crosbie's mind, dominating even her fear, for although she would not own to it, she really was frightened. At half-past twelve the sounds ceased altogether and the Crosbies retired to rest.

The next day, Major Crosbie, assisted by his valet (who had been his soldier-servant when with his regiment), made a thorough and exhaustive inspection of the whole house, but discovered nothing that could in any way account for the extraordinary occurrence of the previous night.

The smoking-room was most carefully examined, but presented no peculiar features, beyond the fact that on the left-hand side of the fireplace was a deep recess, and that on the right-hand side there was none, the wall being flush with the fireplace.

There being no cupboard in the room adjoining to account for the extra thickness of the wall in that place, Major Crosbie was fain to believe that it was merely a builder's freak, and was unable to connect it, even in the remotest manner, with the sounds which he sought to explain.

He felt quite at a loss, but determined to sit up again that evening in company with Wright, intending to search the smoking-room thoroughly as soon as the voices began.

He persuaded his wife to change bedrooms with him, which she was pleased to do, and whilst enjoining the strictest secrecy on Wright, he told him he would be wanted to share in the vigil.

Accordingly, eleven o'clock found master and man awaiting the beginning of the ghostly conversation, each armed with a bull's eye lantern.

They had not long to wait; it seemed to take place exactly beneath them, near the fireplace, on the side where there was no recess: arguing, entreating, imploring, menacing, threatening, and then the dead silence; to begin all over again after a short interval.

After having heard it once or twice, they started on an inspection tour all round the house, but everything was perfectly quiet until they came to the smoking-room.

Wright opened the door and stood aside, holding the handle to let the major pass in. As soon as they were fairly in the room, they became aware that this was the place in which the mysterious persons, or rather voices, conversed.

A dreadful feeling seemed to convince them that they were not alone in the room: some invisible presence seemed to be there filling them with inexplicable terror.

Moved by the same impulse, they turned the light of their lanterns on the place close to them whence the voices seemed to come; but there was nothing: still the confused murmur went on, perfectly audible as to sound, quite indistinguishable as to words, until, the usual climax having been reached, it died into silence.

At the same moment the light in both lanterns was suddenly extinguished, and Major Crosbie felt his arm tightly gripped by Wright, who whispered:

"Oh, sir, look on the wall; look on the wall!"

Major Crosbie turned round and saw on the wall, at the righthand side of the fireplace, a most peculiar apparation.

It was a rather small bluish-white spot, which quivered and wavered about like a ray of moonshine; but as he looked, it gained in intensity and ceased to move.

He was thus enabled to make out the semblance of a hand—a woman's hand—thin and emaciated, the palm turned outwards, the finger tops torn and bleeding, and the joints strained and tense as if the hand were pushing against something with all its might.

It was about six feet from the ground, and nothing else, save a couple of inches of delicate ivory-white wrist, was then visible.

Dumb with amazement, Major Crosbie stared speechlessly at the little hand, wondering if by any chance he could be asleep and dreaming.

Almost at his elbow, the ghostly voices once more began their altercation, but he was so engrossed in looking at the hand that he scarcely noticed them.

Wright was in an awful fright and clung hard to his master's arm as the only refuge against the overpowering sense of creeping horror which had come over both of them.

Suddenly, the voices having again ceased, after having reached their usual angry climax, the two men became aware that about a foot below the apparition of the hand another object had suddenly become visible.

It was a face—a woman's face—pale and drawn, and filled with an agonising look of terror. Horror-stricken, the dark grey eyes gazed straight at them, the pupils dilated with helpless fear; the lovely curved lips were pinched and drawn up over the small white teeth; a mass of golden curls hung low on her forehead.

Breathless, the two men gazed at the face on the wall until the speechless horror it expressed seemed to communicate itself to them, and with one impulse, sick with fright, utterly incapable of saying how they got there, they found themselves outside the smoking room in the passage. Silently they went up the stairs to Major Crosbie's bedroom, and it was not until they found themselves there that either of them cared to speak.

By this time they had been able to collect their senses and Major Crosbie was rather ashamed of his precipitate retreat.

"Well, Wright," he said, "and what did you see?"

"Faith, sir, I'm thinking I saw just what you did," said Wright seriously, "and a mighty queer thing it was, too!"

"How was it our lanterns went out so suddenly?" asked Major Crosbie.

"They didn't go out, sir," answered Wright; "they were put out."

"Well, I have had enough ghost hunting for one night," said his master, "so I shall go to bed now, and you had better do the same. We will have a good search all over the house to-morrow, and I will go and ask the agent if this house is supposed to be haunted. In the meantime, be careful not to say anything about what we saw either to Mrs. Crosbie or to the maids."

The next day the whole house, and more particularly the smoking room, was submitted to a more searching investigation than the former one, with the same fruitless result.

The agent, when questioned, denied any knowledge of the house being haunted, and, in fact, made sarcastic remarks which somewhat nettled Major Crosbie, knowing, as he did, that he had been most thoroughly alarmed.

Mrs. Crosbie was naturally very anxious to hear the result of the midnight vigil, but to her disappointment, she found both her husband and the man servant singularly reticent on the subject.

On the following day, two of Major Crosbie's former brother officers arrived for a week's shooting, and the bustle attendant on their arrival the peculiarities of the smoking room were forgotten until the evening, when they all adjourned thither for their post-prandial smoke. The clock striking 11 recalled the event to Major Crosby's recollection.

"By Jove," he exclaimed, "I hope neither of you fellows are afflicted with nerves, because we run a regular ghost show in this room, and it is just about this time that the performance usually begins."

His friends looked slightly incredulous, and he gave them a rapid sketch of what had taken place the evening before.

"Oh, we must see this out," exclaimed Captain Lawrence gaily. "You had better call Wright, and we will make a night of it. What did you say?" he asked quickly of Major Crosbie.

"I did not say anything," replied the Major, looking slightly surprised.

"Oh, I thought I heard someone speak, so concluded it was you."

"It is more likely to be our invisible friends," returned Jack Crosbie, lowering his voice slightly. A slight pause ensued, during which the voices became distinctly audible; the two newcomers listened in amazement, looking all round the room to to discover whence the voices proceeded, but of course they saw nothing.

"We will keep the lamps lit," said Major Crosbie, "and that will enable us to see if there is any humbug going on."

Hardly were the words out of his mouth when all three lamps went out and the voices began again. At the same time, the hand became distinctly visible on the wall opposite and a few minutes after the face.

Major Crosbie experienced the same awful sensation of horror creeping over him and felt certain that the two others were similarly affected.

Silently they sat, watching the entreating, agonised expression of the beautiful face and the awful terror in the dark gray eyes; so intense was the feeling they inspired that all three men ceased to think of the face as a ghostly one, but almost imagined that it was a real person, suffering untold cruelties, which they seemed forced by some invisible power to witness without being able to prevent.

The minutes sped on, each one increasing the sickening fear and horror which possessed the spectators, until with one accord they made for the door and found themselves pale and trembling in the passage.

"Great Scots," said Captain Lawrence, "what was it? I would not go through that again for something. Have you no idea what it is, Crosbie?"

"Not the slightest," replied the major. "And what is more, I am at a loss to account for the awful sensation of fright which seizes on one by degrees. The face alone does not produce that effect, as I do not feel in the least alarmed by it; but there is some strange sort of presence in the room which is terrible and which, I am bound to say, paralyses me with fear."

"Yes, I also had the sensation you describe," rejoined Colonel Wheeler, "and I account for it in this way: I am certain we were not alone in that room; there was some other ghostly presence and a malevolent one to boot.

"How otherwise account for the intense sympathy with that agonised, terrified face, followed by the utter horror and dread, which gave one the sensation of being helpless spectators of some awful crime? It was really horrible and I am not ashamed to say that I was in a most terrible funk."

"It will be best for all of us to try and forget it in sleep," said Major Crosbie, "and to-morrow, I will have that wall pulled down to see if we can account for this ghastly vision in any way. If not, we must leave the house, for one really cannot go on living with that sort of thing happening every night; it would be altogether too wearing."

The trio separated for the night and the next morning found them busily assisting the mason who had come to pull down the wall.

When they had reached the centre, they came upon a little sort of cell about two feet square and six feet high; there was just room for one man to stand upright in it without moving.

On the floor they found the bones of a human skeleton, which on examination proved to be those of a female. This discovery rather staggered the finders, but it confirmed their opinion that some terrible crime or tragedy had taken place in the house.

Was it possible that the body of some murdered victim had been disposed of in that little cell? or, more awful still, had she been buried alive in it? Something of the sort must certainly have taken place to account for the bones being there at all.

Major Crosbie had them carefully removed and buried in a remote corner of the churchyard, and from that time the smoking-room was free of the dreadful sights and the spectral voices.

But somehow or other, the house never felt comfortable, and very shortly after the discovery of the skeleton, Major and Mrs. Crosbie left for the south, forfeiting the remainder of their lease.

Their ostensible reason was the severity of the northern climate, but in reality, they never felt quite sure that they might not, at some future date, see once again the face on the wall.

THE MARRIED MAN.—"Now," said the bride, "Henry, I want you to understand distinctly, that I do not wish to be taken for a bride. I am going to behave as if I were an old married woman. So, dearest, do not think me cold and unloving if I treat you very practically when there is anybody by."

"I don't believe I can pass for an old married man. I am so fond of you that I am bound to show it. I am sure to give the snap away."

"No, you mustn't. It's easy enough; and I insist that you behave just like old married men do. Do you hear?"

"Well, darling, I'll try, but I know I shall not succeed."

The first evening of their arrival the bride retired to her chamber and the groom fell in with a whist party, with whom he sat playing cards until four o'clock in the morning. His wife spent the weary hours waiting.

At last he turned up, and met his grief-stricken bride with the hilarious question:—

"Well, ain't I doing the old married man like a daisy?"

She never referred to the subject again, and everybody knew after that that they had just been married.

THERE is always some hope for the mind of a person who has the habit and love of reading, even if it be only novels. However slight may be the pretensions of the novelist to genius or talent, the chances are enormous that he is a more cultivated man, better educated, and more thoughtful than the illiterate people whose talk is all small scandal and sporting or commercial "shop."

Bric-a-Brac.

THE STAGE.—The stage is in China the lowest of professions. Actors share with barbers the pain of exclusion from competition at literary examinations. Every other man in the empire can compete, and every successful candidate is a probable mandarin. Actors and barbers alone can never attain to the privilege.

EXAMINATIONS.—The examination papers of the children in a certain public school contained the following original definitions—"'Repugnant,' one who repugs." "'Obelisk,' one of the marks of punctuation." "'Ironical,' something very hard." "'Monastery,' a place for monsters." "The 'ebullition' is when the tide goes away out." "'Savage' means when a man rides wild horses. "'Frantic' is something up in the garrett." "A somnambulist is a man that talks when you don't know where he is." "'Pully' is a kind of chicken." "'Ventilation' is letting in contaiminated air."

RATS AS IVORY TURNERS.—Rats are said to be very fond of gnawing at elephants' tusks when they have the chance, which does not often happen nowadays. It takes a sharp tooth to tackle a tusk of this kind. They do not seem to care for the tusks of the Indian elephant, which are, for the rats' purpose, lacking in gelatine, or animal glue; but they nibble at the purest part of the tusks of the African elephant. The ivory turner had absolute confidence in the taste of the rat, and always selected the ivory that bore signs of having been gnawed when he wanted a piece for especially fine work.

"THE CRY IS STILL, 'THEY COME.'"—One of the harmless insects known as a "black beetle," is more correctly called the cockroach. But though a common enough object in northern lands, tropical countries seem to be blessed with its presence in vasts numbers, and North Queensland appears to be a veritable paradise of cockroaches. In the coast towns the delightful creatures come out of their dens at dusk and swarm over floor, wall, and ceiling, until there is neither standing nor sitting room, and thousands upon thousands are compelled to spend the hours of darkness in the gardens and yards.

A CAT AND DOG LIFE.—That cats and dogs sometimes agree very well will be clear from this little anecdote. Puss and the dog had found out a clever plan for stealing food, and they carried it on so successfully that the mysterious disappearance of the victuals had to be seriously inquired into. Then the whole plot was discovered. The cat gave the dog the signal by mewing when the "coast was clear." Then the pair sneaked off to the larder. Here the cat climbed on to the shelf and flung the good things down to the dog. In the case of covered dishes, puss kept the lid open with one foot, whilst with the other it pawed out the titbits for the dog and herself.

AN AFFECTIONATE ELEPHANT.—Tame elephants are often very kind and especially fond of children. There was a little girl who used to walk every morning, along with her nurse, in the Jardin des Plantes in Paris before the gardens were opened to the public. Of course she was frequently meeting with the elephant, and as they passed it was amusing to watch the pains the big beast took to avoid trampling upon the wee lassie. At last he grew bolder, and whenever he happened to be going in the same direction as the girl, he would gently push the end of his trunk inside her arm and let it rest there as he walked by her side. What a funny looking pair of lovers they made!

HOW THE CABBAGES WERE SAVED.—Once a year the people of Duben, a town in Prussian Saxony, hold high holiday, with banners, music and sports in the woods. They do well to be glad, for they might easily have had to spend the day clad in sackcloth and ashes. Many years since, they resolved to cut down the trees around their town, and the result was that ere long the sand that lay to the north-east began to invade everything. Fields, gardens, and cabbage-plots were smothered by the common foe. As vegetables vanished and grass land disappeared, the folk grew alarmed for their own victuals and the food for their cattle. Then the forester of the district offered to save them. Woods of acacias, birches and pines were planted, and in course of time their rootlets bound the sand together and prevented it from advancing on the town. And so the mischief was stopped, and in memory of their deliverance they wisely jubilate every year.

A BUNCH OF VIOLETS.

BY M. S.

A penny spent, and speedily
  I'm borne through time and space again;
My pulse is bounding strong and high,
  And Youth's bright hopes fill heart and brain.
No longer worn and old, I view
  The narrow squalid city street;
The sky overhead is deeply blue,
  The long grass bends beneath my feet.

The world is glad and bright and fair,
  And doubts and fears are things unknown;
I laugh at woe, I mock to care,
  And wrong and pain are words alone.
I leave afar the city's din,
  From sorrows free as from regrets;
The magic spell I find within
  A tiny bunch of violets!

A WAR WITH FATE

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A FATAL MOMENT," "A RIGHTEOUS RETRIBUTION," "WRECKED," "THE FRUITS OF A CRIME," ETC.

CHAPTER XXI.

As the trap pulled up at the door of the railway-station, Tryan laughed; and the sound of the laugh reminded his companion again of the discomforts of life in lodgings—it was such a mere ghost of a laugh.

"You're getting quite poetical, Darncombe!" said Tryan. "Rather a new line for you, isn't it? Things must be pretty bad with you, I'm afraid! Good day! Offer my best regards to the ladies at Dale Cottage! And don't stay out too late; there's plenty of snow to come!"

"Something a bit wrong with Cambray to-day," thought Darncombe, as he shook the reins and sent the mare back sharply past the empty villas and round the curve into the High Street again.

"There was almost a touch of nastiness in his manner just now; and he's one of the pleasantest fellows going, as a rule. That confounded lodging-house cooking has started indigestion; and small wonder! Don't I know their chops and steaks of old!"

When Major Darncombe was announced, Thir was asleep on the rug, with her head against Aunt Carry's knee; and, in the bustle of waking her up and making her understand that there was company present, they all forgot that this was Major Darncombe's first visit to Dale Cottage, and received him with an unceremoniousness which he found delightful.

He was enchanted with the informal greeting—enchanted with Thir's prettiness, her brilliant eyes and flushed cheeks, the charming warmth of her welcome, as she pulled "Aunt Polly's big chair" near to the fire for him.

He was conscious of a delicate difference between the atmosphere of this drawing-room and that of those he was more accustomed to.

This room, with its old-fashioned large-patterned carpet and its figured damask curtains, was not to be compared for beauty or elegance with some he knew of in the houses of his fellow-officers; but those others were so palpably reception-rooms, prepared for the accommodation of visitors.

In such a room one lost sight of the idea that it was a privilege to be there; it became a mere formality to pay one's respects to the Colonel's wife once a month or so on her "At home" day, or to offer a few pretty compliments to the newest bride in the regiment at her first reception; but here all was so different, so homelike!

To the Major, it seemed that there was something sacred in the sweet seclusion of this household; and, as he listened to Miss Carry's musical voice and responded to Thir's merry nonsense, he told himself, with ever-increasing emphasis, that he was indeed a lucky fellow to have gained an entree into such an enchanted castle, where all was daintiness, brightness, and purity.

It was quite dusk before he started for the return drive to Beverley; but Dora Valland, watching from the dining-room window for her father's return, saw and recognised the smart phaeton as it dashed past the Rectory gate, outlined against the snow on the opposite hedge, and wondered where the Major had been spending the hour and a half since he left her.

But she had not much thought to bestow on such a trifling matter just then. That afternoon had been fertile in events for her. There was the meeting with Tryan, and her attempt to arouse in him some touch of pity for her; there was this extraordinary legacy from poor infatuated Sidney Poplett; there was the weekly newspaper from Hull lying on the table in the room behind her, where she had thrown it in her ungovernable excitement, after reading a paragraph headed, "Wreck of the Collier Barque Maria Eldred! Loss of the crew!"

Was fate frowning on her at last? she was wondering passionately. Was she to win in the long run, after all?

* * * * * *

All through that night Dora Valland was unable to get that newspaper paragraph thoroughly out of her mind. She slept in spite of her excitement from the physical fatigue consequent upon her vigil of the preceding night; but even in her sleep that headline in the Hull weekly newspaper haunted her—"Wreck of the Collier Barque Maria Eldred! Loss of the crew!"

Each time she awoke the words seemed to be ringing in her ears, until she would have given worlds to forget them for just five minutes—five minutes of rest for her aching heart, her over-tired brain.

At breakfast time Mr. Valland informed his daughter that he was going over to Beverley again, and would not be back until the evening.

He did not mention the purpose of his visit; nor did he suggest that Dora should accompany him. Although no words had passed between them on the subject, Mr. Valland knew quite well how bitterly his daughter resented his second marriage, and, as she had not chosen of her own free will to offer her sympathy to Mrs. Poplett in her terrible grief, he would not ask it of her as a favor.

"By-the-bye, Dora," he said, as he took his gloves from her in the hall—for, while lacking in the spirit of her duty to him, she was rigidly observant of the letter, and never failed to pay him those small attentions to which he had grown accustomed—"the man from the carpet warehouse may be over to-day to take measurements for new carpets—they said towards the end of the week. Tell him they are not to go on with the order until they hear from me again. Poor Sidney's death is bound to alter everything. The new carpets will certainly not be wanted for a few months to come."

"I will see to it," she answered quietly. "If I go out myself, I will leave a message with Ursula."

"Mrs. Poplett gave me a message for you," he said, speaking in a way which made her understand that he would have preferred to keep silence on the subject. "I could not give it last night—you were in bed, or, at any rate, in your room, when I came home. She is anxious that you should know you have her best wishes as to the enjoyment of her poor boy's money."

"She is very kind; will you please thank her for me?"

The words were uttered in such a tone that it was impossible to guess at the speaker's feeling. There might be a suspicion of gratitude behind the formal sentence, or it might hide a touch of derision at the worldly-wisdom which made a virtue of necessity.

Mrs. Valland turned towards the door with a sigh of resignation. He often felt, after a tete-a-tete with his self-contained daughter, that Providence had been a little hard on him in this matter. He would have loved a bright, responsive, sunny-hearted girl very dearly; whereas now he had to seek farther afield for sympathy. He was driving to Beverly to-day, so that he might be independent of trains and time-tables and suit his own convenience concerning the hour of his return.

When Dora turned into the house after seeing her father off, she went straight to Ursula and gave her the orders for the day, and then dressed herself for a journey. She had made up her mind to go to Hull and find out for herself the exact truth concerning the loss of the Maria Eldred's crew.

It was not yet ten o'clock, and she was fortunate enough to get through the village without meeting anybody to detain her. It was not the kind of morning to entice people out for an early walk—it was bitterly cold, with a gray low-hanging sky overhead, and a couple of inches of feathery untrodden snow underfoot.

But Miss Valland was not in the habit of paying much attention to the weather, and she took as little notice of the snow at Quilter's Common as she did of the mud and slush in the Hull streets. She made her way straight to the shipping offices, and went into the first she came to.

"I have come to make some inquiries concerning the crew of the Maria Eldred," she said to a clerk at the desk; "can you tell me where I should go for information?"

"To the owners themselves, ma'am," the man answered—"Messrs. Smithson & Sons, 2a, Barleycorn street—the last office on the right hand side before you reach the wharves."

She thanked him, turned out into the slushy street again, and inquired her way to the given address.

This was a part of the town she knew very little about, and, though she prided herself on her utter absence of fastidiousness in such matters, she felt a little strange when she found herself among the exclusively sea-going population.

There was something so distinctive about the people that it was almost like being in a foreign city. She was conscious, too, that, plainly as she was dressed, she was creating a considerable amount of curiosity among the sun-browned men whom she met, and she was distinctly relieved when she saw the name "Smithson & Sons" across the window blinds of the last house in the street—the house which faced the wharves.

She was quickening her steps, when she heard her own name spoken from behind, and, turning, found Tryan at her side. Though there was nothing surprising in the meeting, it startled her, and she thought it a bad omen, happening during this particular expedition.

"I have been hurrying after you the whole length of the street," he said, as he gravely raised his hat; and, seeing that he did not mean to offer his hand, she kept her own in her muff. "It is scarcely a pleasant part of the town for a lady to be going about alone; will you let me walk with you till you have finished your business down here?"

"No, thank you," she replied; "it is quite unnecessary. I am too accustomed to take my own part among rough people to be nervous. I shall do very well."

"Still some of these people are more than rough," he persisted quietly. "There is a good deal of drinking among the sailors, some of them are nothing better than wild beasts when they are in that state. I've been hanging about the wharves a great deal lately, trying to kill time, and I've seen one or two very nasty rows. I wish you would let me stay."

"Hanging about the wharves!" she repeated. "Not a very exciting amusement, I'm afraid!"

"Amusing enough to one who has nothing better to do," he returned carelessly. "There are worse ways of spending a morning than chatting to sailor-fellows who have been everywhere and seen everything. Shall we be moving on?"

She glanced quickly behind her at the name on the window-blind, and went on at once, with him at her side, past Smithson & Sons' office, round the corner to the open wharves.

"Where is it you want to go to?" he asked. "I know this part of the town quite well, and——"

"Never mind my business just now," she interposed abruptly, dropping her cold-possessed manner in a moment, and facing him with a sudden vehemence which reminded him of the other interview in the library at Quilter's Common: "any day will do for this affair of mine, but it may be months again before I get an opportunity of a word in private with you! Tryan, let me speak to you for just five minutes, as I should have spoken if nothing had ever happened to destroy the old happy friendship between us. This large sum of money that has come to me so unexpectedly—will you accept the loan of it, or part of it, to free the Hall from debt?"

"Good gracious, Dora, you can't know what you are talking about!" He looked at her as if the suggestion had shocked him immeasurably.

"Oh, I knew you would take it at first like that," she answered, too intent on her purpose to be abashed by his reception of her offer; "I knew it would be difficult to overcome your scruples! The idea came into my head as soon as I had recovered from the first shock of surprise. My first thought, when I had thoroughly realized the fact of owning this money, was, 'If Tryan would only let me help him with it—if he would only let me make up in some measure for the disappointment I have brought upon him!'"

He shook his head and smiled.

"All the same, you must have known I should never take advantage of your offer," he said quietly. "That sort of disappointment can't be compensated by money."

"But to be able to keep the old Hall," she urged—"that would surely be something—to keep the old servants you have known all your life—to keep the old place where your people have lived for years and years!"

"It is too late," he said; "the place has been sold for some time."

"But you can buy it back!"

"Not with your money—no!" he answered; and at the bitterness of his tone all her blood seemed to ebb from her heart, leaving it cold and pulseless. "I could not accept such a loan as that from only one woman in the world—my wife. Don't say anything more about it; only understand that I fully appreciate the generosity of the offer."

"Generosity!" she echoed bitterly. "There is a great deal of generosity in making a bid for one's own benefit! Has it ever occurred to you that, in making you wretched, I have wrecked my own peace of mind too? I don't suppose so—men can't enter into women's feelings regarding such matters. When I see you look as you are looking now, do you think I don't suffer? Can't you understand that it is unspeakable agony to me to see how these few months have hardened and aged you, and to know that it is all my doing?

"And can you fathom such a state of mind as this—to pass your whole life in a purgatory of remorse for something you have done, and yet to be so thoroughly the slave of your evil passions as to be powerless to set the wrong right—to be held in the grip of sin, to writhe in the clutch of your evil-doing, and to go on week after week, month after month, in such horrible torments, and yet be incapable of the one great impulse of self-abnegation which would free yourself from the misery? Can you enter into such a state of mind as that?"

"Then she was right!" he exclaimed, gazing horror-stricken at her marble-white face. "All this time you have known that I never did that thing."

Though he had mentioned no name, she understood the allusion instantly. To him, Thirza Bright had accused her of lying. The thought stirred up her mad jealousy afresh and checked her impulse of self-betrayal as nothing else would have done.

"She said that?" she exclaimed, in a tone of suppressed fury.

"It was like her! And you believed just what she chose to tell you! Well, I suppose that was like you, too, or rather it was like any man blindly in love! And you thought that of me! You thought that I had invented the whole of that story about seeing you in the quarry on that night! That was what you thought of your oldest friend, just because the girl you were in love with asked you to think it!"

She laughed very bitterly, then stopped suddenly, with a sob.

"Good heavens, how cruel you men can be!" she moaned, beating her bosom violently with her hand as if the pain of the thought was intolerable.

"How cruel you are in your heedlessness! What had I ever done to you," she went on, in a half stifled voice, "that you should think such a thing as that of me at the bidding of a recent acquaintance? This is surely the summit of my misery, to know you could think me capable of such wholesale lying as that! Oh, Heaven—the pain and the suffering of it all! If I were only at rest—at rest!"

Tryan felt the truth of every word as she uttered it, and it was hard to say whether he was more indignant with himself than sorry for her. He seemed to realise now for the first time that, in believing this thing for her, he had done her a cruel wrong; and in this thought he almost lost sight of the wrong she had done him.

"I am sorry," he said humbly—"very sorry. It seems as if I am fated to cause you pain—Heaven alone knows how unwillingly! Let us get away from the subject altogether. Tell me where it is you want to go. If your business won't take you very long, I might be able to see you back all the way. I have to see the captain of a ship here, and then I am going over to Quilter's Common to meet a man who is coming to make a valuation of the pictures at the old place."

But she would not agree to this arrangement.

"I shall recover myself sooner alone," she declared; "and, besides, I don't know how long my business will take me. Put me into a cab, please, and tell the man to drive me back to Barleycorn street."

He did as she asked, but he did it unwillingly. Darncombe's remark on the previous day, made as they drove from the Rectory—"Weren't you a bit rough on

Miss Valland?"—had already put him into a rather self-accusing frame of mind, and now, by letting him see how she suffered under his unjust suspicions, she had created in him a feeling of remorse.

He felt reluctant to part from her until he had obtained her pardon for the wrong he had done her in his own mind; but she insisted upon going her own way, and there was nothing for him to do but obey. And so he left her, feeling penitent and consequently more kindly towards her than he would have thought possible two days earlier.

And Dora, as she drove to Smithson & Sons' office, was conscious of this change in his feelings, conscious of it above all the turmoil of her own emotion, above all her hatred of Thirza Bright, conscious and triumphant.

If she could but once turn the tide of his affection towards her again, who could tell how high it might flow? The thought made her heart throb, and sent the blood to her cheeks, until she looked almost the Dora Valland of old, beautiful, queen-like, and young.

The youthful clerk in the outer office at Smithson & Sons' was almost dazzled when he looked up from his ledger and saw this beautiful woman standing at his desk; so overcome was he that at first he had not presence of mind to understand the drift of her business, and she had to put her inquiry again.

"It is about the Maria Eldred," she said. "I saw in a newspaper that the vessel was wrecked and the whole crew lost. There was a man on board in whom I was greatly interested for his poor mother's sake, and I thought perhaps there might still be some hope that some of the crew were saved. Could you get me any information on the matter, do you think?"

"Oh, the newspaper report was all wrong, as usual!" replied the clerk. "We had the survivors—five of them—in the office here this morning; they came across from Flushing in the packet. What is the name of the person you are interested in, madam? I will go and make inquiries about him."

"John Martin was his name."

"Thank you. If you will take a seat, I'll go to Mr. Smithson."

She took the chair he offered; but, the moment he left the room, she began to move about in intense excitement. She had felt from the first that this news was too good to be true. How cruel it would be if this John Martin were among the five survivors! And then she recovered herself with a struggle, shocked to find how nearly she was praying for this man's death.

"And why not?" she muttered recklessly. "I've done worse—why not this?"

"Mr. Smithson will see you himself, madam," said the clerk, holding a door open; and she crossed over to it at once, and found herself in the presence of the ship owner.

Mr. Smithson looked curiously at the handsome well-dressed woman who was so excited and eager for news of one of their most disreputable seamen; but, though curious, he was greatly astonished—he had had too much experience among sailors to be astonished at anything in connection with them.

"It is John Martin you are inquiring for?" he began at once, pitying her evident agitation. "No—he was not drowned; he left this office half an hour ago."

She caught her breath and put up her hand quickly to hide her face.

"If I might offer a word of advice," Mr. Smithson went on gently, "I should recommend you to go home quietly, and leave him to himself for a day or two. If you know much about sailors, you won't want telling that; after being wrecked, they are not the pleasantest society in the world for a week or two. It is not altogether their fault perhaps; everybody wants to congratulate them on their escape; and Jack Tar's congratulations invariably take a bibulous form. When Martin was here just now, he was hardly fit company for a lady; and he will be worse as the day goes on—very boisterous and quarrelsome in his cups."

"I am obliged to you," she replied; "I must try to see him all the same. No—I am all right, thank you"—as the ship-owner suggested a glass of wine—"I shall be quite well in the air. Good morning, and thank you again!"

Once out upon the pavement, she stood still for a moment, trying hard to steady her thoughts, and never getting beyond the fact that Tryan Cambray and this John Martin were both of them probably on the wharves at that moment, that they might meet, that Tryan's liking for sailors might lead him into conversation with this one, who had so lately come through the perils of a shipwreck; and then—and then ——

For three hours Dora Valland wandered up and down the cold exposed slushy wharves, watching, looking, hoping for a glimpse of the man she was in search of; and then, exhausted physically and mentally, she went back to the railway station, and took her seat in the next train leaving for Quilter's Common.

CHAPTER XXII.

WHEN Tryan arrived at the Hall after his disquieting interview with Dora Valland on the quay at Hull, he made a discovery which put that event quite out of his mind for the time being. During the past week builders and contractors had been about the place, taking surveys for alterations and repairs; and, from Costigan's remarks, he gathered that in every case these alterations and repairs were identical with those upon which his heart had been set for years past.

The first instance of this only set him wishing that it was he who was going to carry out the alterations, instead of a stranger; the second instance set him wondering at the coincidence; the third astonished him, and he began trying to account for it in some reasonable manner. It was curious that a stranger should be ordering just those alterations and repairs which he would have carried out himself if he had had the means.

The old covered way leading from the conservatory to the training stables was to be put into thorough repair; the pavilion library at the end of the wing, rendered uninhabitable five years before by the falling of a tree, was to be set in order, and, stranger still, was to be enlarged by the addition of three bay-windows in place of the old casements.

This last detail had been a day-dream of his own, and it puzzled him exceeding to account for the same idea occurring who could scarcely have been in the place, except on a day's visit, and who could hardly have realized the beauty of the views from those pavilion windows during the spring and summer months.

This however was only the beginning. As Costigan went on with his list, Tryan's astonishment increased, until a careless remark of the old man's put him on the track of a solution of the mystery.

"Whoever it is that's bought it, sorr, nobody can accuse them of being mane with their money: more betoken, I heard some of the work-people sayin' to one another that it was a rich American woman, wid more money than she could count."

As Costigan uttered these words, "Thir!" was the name that leapt to Tryan's lips.

It was odd how the notion, having once taken possession of him, refused to be dislodged. Thir was exactly the sort of girl who would keep the fact of her wealth in the background, just for the sake of winning her way into people's liking without the help that a great fortune might give.

He was now as certain of the individuality of this mysterious purchaser as he could be without proof; and the more he thought the matter over the more certain he felt.

For fresh memories, which pointed almost conclusively to the fact that Thirza Bright must have money of her own, came to him every moment, one upon another, until at the only surprise left to him was caused by the thought of his own dense stupidity in not having seen the truth before.

As Tryan walked along towards the High street, with his mind still full of this astonishing discovery, he saw Thir herself, with Sheelah in attendance, come into view and turn off towards the Pantiles, without a look in his direction.

Just for a moment he hung back, meaning to let her go on; but a sudden desire to hear the truth from her own lips seized him, he whistled to the dog.

At the whistle Sheelah turned and ran back to meet him, while Thir waited, a sweet dainty little figure in dark fur and crimson, vividly outlined against the untrodden snow of the country road.

"I was really letting you go on," said Tryan, as he came up and shook hands with her, all the loving admiration that was in his heart shining in his eyes as he took in the pretty details of her toilette, "for I am in a hurry to get back by the next train. I wanted to ask you a question, little friend. I'm very curious on a certain point, and I'm pretty sure you can satisfy my curiosity if you choose."

"Yes," she returned inquiringly, her face glowing with the pleasure of the meeting—"yes, friend Tryan? Well, I'm pretty sure I shall choose, unless it is something that it would not be good for you to know."

"Very well, then. Who is the rich American lady who has bought my old home? Oh, Thir, Thir," he murmured, as she flushed vividly from chin to brow at the quickly-delivered question—"oh, Thir, my friend, is it you who has done this thing?"

For a moment she paused, with a guilty look on her face; then she gave her old defiant glance.

"And why not?" she asked, trying to laugh and treat the matter as of no importance. "Mayn't I use my money as I like, friend Tryan?"

"But to think of it," he said, speaking as if the idea troubled him—"to think of your being rich like that, Thir!"

"How are people usually rich, then?" she inquired, still with a touch of flippancy in her manner.

But when she only shook his head and smiled the tender smile she knew so well, she dropped her frivolity at once and drew a step nearer to him on the deserted road.

"How did you find out, Tryan?" she asked softly. "Has anybody sneaked on me?"

"I've been hearing about your alterations up yonder," he answered. "I knew there was only one person in the world who was in the secret of my heart's desires concerning the old place, and that made me suspicious. Thir, why are you spending your money so recklessly? Surely you might use it to greater advantage than you are doing?"

"Mayn't a woman do as she likes with her own, Tryan? Besides, I mean to locate myself in that pleasant old homestead by-and-by, and devote my whole life to setting it straight, just as you would like to have it."

"Hush, Thir!" he exclaimed. "It hurts me, dear child!"

"I don't see why it should," she retorted. "I rather hoped it would please you to know the place was not to be pulled about till it was altered out of all likeness to its old self."

"And so it will, when I'm used to the idea; but I can't get over my surprise at your wealth, Thir; and—another thing—if you are doing this only to please me, it will trouble me to think of it."

"Friend Tryan," she interposed, drawing herself up to her full height, and looking at him with an assumed assertiveness which did not in the least mask the real tenderness behind it, "I wish very much that you would disabuse your mind of the notion that I am so transcendentally unselfish. I do assure you that I've as quick an eye for my own advantage or pleasure as any girl in this world; and I'm as keen to get hold of it, too! There is no romantic self-sacrifice about me. How is that Quilter's Common sees you for two days running? Major Darncombe told us all about that. He had tea with us at the Cottage last night."

"Yes—I know. He made no secret of where he was going."

"Of course not! Why should he?" she asked, looking a little surprised at his manner.

"Nor of the attraction which took him there," added Tryan, looking away from her as he spoke, and making a supreme effort to seem at his ease.

"You don't mean to say he hinted at that to you already?" exclaimed Thir, laughing and blushing and looking a little scandalised. "Well, I opine Major Darncombe has made up his mind not to dawdle over his love-making now he has once started on the job!"

The tone and the words jarred upon Tryan's ears. He had determined to be so thoroughly unselfish over this business, and yet it hurt him to hear her treat it in such an off-hand manner.

"And you," he asked quietly—"how are you disposed towards his love-making, Thir?"

"Well, it is a little bit early to give a decided opinion yet, don't you think?" she answered, "But I believe it is going to be all right."

"Ah!" he said, and stooped to pick Sheelah from the ground, as if he had but that moment become aware of the little creature's joyous raptures. Then he looked at his watch, and found that he had barely time to catch his train. "You must hold her till I'm out of sight, or she will follow me," he said, putting the dog in Thir's arms. "Good-bye, little mademoiselle! When the crisis comes in Darncombe's love affair, remember that he has my best wishes too!"

"Good-bye!" returned Thir, struck in her turn by something odd in his manner, and making no attempt to detain him.

But she stood where he had left her until he turned out of sight round the High street, hoping he would look back for some sign of farewell. He did nothing of the kind however, and she resumed her walk towards the Pantiles, with the sorrow at her heart a little heightened by the trifling neglect.

"Never mind, Sheelah, my love," she murmured, pressing the dog closer to her and soothing it tenderly; "it won't always be like this, my small friend. You and I will have the right at some time to walk alongside of him wherever he goes. We have to keep sort of meek and gentle just now for his sake, my doggie; but you just wait till he's safe away out of this little corner, beyond the reach of certain spiteful claws that we know of, and then you'll see what'll happen; and I reckon you'll be about as well pleased as I shall!"

When Tryan looked at his watch and started off in so hurried a manner, he knew quite well that he had lost his train; but he was ready to seize any excuse for getting away from Thir—he was so doubtful of his own self-control, so afraid that he might betray some of the bitterness he was feeling!

"What a change it was! he thought, as he strode along. "A little over a week ago she was still mine; now she is openly encouraging another! Well, she is right. At last she has recognized the hopelessness of our case, and has resolutely set to work to put an end to it. I am glad for her sake—honestly glad! All the same, though, the suddenness of the wrench is a good tug at a fellow's heart-strings!"

As he neared the wide part of the street in front of The Wheatsheaf, he saw there was some excitement going on. Two or three women, with their aprons thrown over their heads, were standing in the roadway opposite to the door of the tavern, evidently watching something that was taking place inside.

As Tryan drew nearer, he heard voices raised in vehement altercation, and, just as he reached the spot, two men came wrestling and struggling out of the doorway, and fell almost at his feet.

"Hallo—what's all this about, Weston?" he called out, as the landlord shook himself free of the other man's clutches. "What's the row, eh?"

"Good-day, sir!" said Weston, setting himself straight after his tussle. "It's a quarrelsome brute of a sailor-chap from Hull, as come into the parlor an hour ago, three parts drunk already, and he's been trying to set everybody by the ears ever since. He's aggravated me to that pitch that at last I ordered him out, and, when he wouldn't go, I just put him out—that's all, sir!"

"From Hull is he?" said Tryan, looking at the sailor, who had raised himself to a sitting posture in the snowy street, and was trying to push his long dark curly hair from his eyes. "Well, he'd better get back there as soon as can; he'll be frozen to death if he spends the night about the roads here."

"And a good riddance, too!" muttered Weston, whose usually quiet temper was evidently very much ruffled.

"You've given him a rare shaking up," Tryan went on. "He looks pretty well dazed. Do you think he knocked his head as he fell? I wonder if the poor beggar would let me give him a help along to the station? I'm going that way, and he might just as well get back to Hull as spend the night in the lock-up here. Come, old fellow—it can't be very comfortable down there in the snow!"

The drunken man seemed to recognize the difference in the tone at once, and obediently struggled to his feet. And so it ended in Tryan's leading him off towards the station, followed by the complimentary remarks of the people about the tavern door.

"He's just got a heart of gold has Mr. Cambray!" said Weston. "I hope that drunken foreign-looking vagabond hasn't a knife about him, for the road is main lonely between the Doctor's house and the station; and there's no being up with the tricks of them sailor-chaps!"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

THERE is not any virtue the exercise of which, even momentarily, will not impress a new fairness upon the features; nor on them only, but on the whole body where normal and intellectual faculties have operation, for all the movements and gestures, however slight, are different in their modes according to the mind that governs them: and on the gentleness and decision of right feeling follows grace of action, and, through continuance of this, grace of form.

THE STORM.

BY I. P. D.

All nature shrinks with dread;
The storm is nigh.
I'lled low along the western verge
Black clouds lie.
Now and again low thunders roll,
The only sound
That stirs the silence of the hour;
While all around
Swift gathering gloom comes on apace.
A presage true,
For see! the tempest moans and shrieks,
While 'thwart the ether blue
Dense blackness racing flies.
With awful roar,
He comes in grandest wrath.
A moment more,
And then the sun, upon the storm-swept waste
Smiles down serene.
No living thing is left, but yes, in time,
Another scene,
As fair as erst was on this spot,
Shall witness bear
To hope, that leads man on
To do and dare,
I'raps the dark, without a thought
Of power supreme,
'Gainst which his best laid plans are but
A futile dream.

An Awkward Fix.

BY J. M.

WHEN I went out in '82 to the Gulf of Carpentaria, it was undoubtedly a wild and unsettled place. Burketown, a resurrected township smelling of sawdust and whisky, was the Ultima Thule of civilization in that part of Australia. The country to the west of it was inhabited only by a few squatters at long intervals apart, or by roving bands of wild blacks, and was the happy hunting-ground or hiding-place of a number of men wanted by the police for horse-stealing or something worse.

The latter were dangerous and troublesome neighbors to have anything to do with. For obvious reasons, to recognise a man and call him by his proper name then, was, in nine cases out of ten, to commit an unpardonable error, and apt to lead to disagreeable consequences.

It was in the month of October, about the commencement of the thunder-storms and the hot weather, when, in charge of a wagon load of goods, I found myself on my way to a cattle-station called Lily-lagoons that had just been opened up one hundred and thirty miles to the west of Burketown.

It might have been about three o'clock in the afternoon when, seeing a storm gathering, our party pushed on so as to reach the shelter of one of those back-block shanties that spring up as if by magic wherever there is a chance of intercepting a few stray checks, and to unhitch before the tropical downpour overtook us.

I remember as I rode up to the rough slab building, with its bark roof, strip of veranda, and general air of untidiness, that I caught a glimpse of some men disappearing into the bush in the rear of the buildings; they were making for a yard hard by, where I made sure their horses were.

Such an experience is by no means an uncommon one in certain outlying parts of the Gulf county, where, generally speaking, there are always a few men keeping out of the way of the police, and who are apprehensive on the approach of strangers, and make themselves scarce until they are assured as to their identity.

Let the reader not put any erroneous construction upon my conduct when I admit sending a certain precocious larikin, whom I had met before, to make their minds easy and fetch them back. I could not afford to be other than on good terms with such a crew—horse flesh was a costly and difficult commodity to replace in the Gulf in those days. When I entered the rough bar-room, Cassidy, the publican, held out his right hand patronisingly towards me, and with his left placed a black bottle on the counter.

I shook hands with him and exchanged compliments; for Jack was as good as his master in the Gulf, so not to be hail-fellow-well-met with every one argued a sad lack of policy, and marked one as the possible victim of future misfortune.

According to the custom of a stranger when entering a bush "hotel," I called upon the bleary-eyed and shaky-looking devotees of old Bilenus, in the guise of several bushmen present, to breast the bar. This they did with an alacrity which, if expended in a better cause, would have been praiseworthy in the extreme. As soon as possible, however, I escaped from the noisy and unpleasant demonstrative little crowd, and went outside to await the team.

I was selecting a spot on which to halt the wagon, when, from behind a huge blood-wood tree, there came a sound as of some one moaning, and going round, I discovered a man lying on his face, evidently in the clutches of that demon of the Gulf, malarial fever.

He nervously grasped an empty canvas water-bag in one hand, and did not seem to be aware of my presence. I appropriated the bag, went down to the lagoon, filled it with water, and came back to him. Tapping him on the shoulder, I said:

"Here, mate; have a drink."

Now, as one knows, save those who have experienced the torments of the fierce fever-thirst, what a pleasant salutation this is. When addressed, he rolled over on his back, and I saw his face for the first time. Having a good memory for "descriptions," I recognised him. He was Billy Main, a young fellow not yet four-and-twenty years of age, and who had at least half-a-dozen warrants out against him for horse-stealing in various parts of the colony.

Not utterly bad, however, or without certain good points, strange as it may seem; but, alas! easily led; one who, from the commission of a foolish and unpremeditated act of dishonesty, and the keeping of bad company, had been led to commit more serious crimes, until he had cut himself off from all chance of honest employment, and now led the miserable life of a hunted wild animal.

There is little that is in reality attractive in the lives of such as Billie, in spite of what a certain absurd and pernicious kind of literature says, and which is generally penned by those who know nothing of the stern and hideous truth. There was nothing in Billie's face that was suggestive of the criminal and foolhardy deeds for which he had been noted.

As it was, I was an utter stranger to him, moreover, "some one whom he could not exactly make out;" so for the minute he regarded me with not a little apprehension his face, and said:

"Then you're not a trap?"

"What do you take me for?" I responded, knowing there was only one way of talking to such men, and I confess feeling not a little sorry for him in his helpless condition; he looked so utterly wretched and neglected. "You'd better take a drink, like a good fellow. And look here; you want to get back to the shanty, for there's a thunder-storm coming up. I'll stow your saddles and gear under the tarpaulin of my wagon when it comes—and here it is."

And up lumbered the heavily-laden wagon, with its driver, "offsider," and twelve horses. I stowed away Billie's belongings; he all the time watching me with a strange mixture of surprise and curiosity.

"You're a new chum, I s'pose?" he remarked at length.

"Well, yes," I answered; "I don't suppose a couple of years in the country counts for much. But get up; it's going to rain."

"Thought as much as how you were a new chum," he said, paying no attention to my last remark, and taking another drink. "When you've been in this country a little longer, you won't trouble your head 'bout every poor beggar you happen to find lying under a gum-tree, and whom you don't know."

"Well, Billie Main," I said, "I happen to know you; and I do not mean to assert that the honor of your acquaintance is such that I'd care to go blowing about it to any of my very particular friends. But that has nothing to do with it. I've had the fever myself, and don't intend to let you lie here; so get up, my bold hero. Here, give me your arm; a drenching in the state you're in now would just about fix the business for you."

"Well, you're a rum un," he said, raising himself wearily on his hands into a sitting position. Then looking at me with a somewhat more reassured and pleasanter expression on his face, he added:

"S'pose I've got to do as you tell me, boss."

His was a pinched, pale, weary-looking face—not the kind of face one would associate with the companionship of horse-thieves and, perhaps, murderers. His voice was pitched in that soft, drawling intonation peculiar to natives of New South Wales; and, in spite of the reputation he bore, he could look one squarely enough in the eyes.

"A good man gone wrong," I thought, "and neglect and ignorance at the bottom of it all." That his natural inclinations were neither of the ungrateful nor vicious sort when uninfluenced by the "flash," bad company he had a weakness for, I knew; and despite what he said, I believe that Billie would have been the first man to help a stranger.

He was weak as a kitten; so giving him my arm, I led him over to the shanty, where he muttered a few words—of thanks, I suppose—and flinging himself down on a rude stretcher under the veranda, lay silent with his head in his hands. An hour or so later, when the fierce and sudden thunder-storm had lifted, we hitched up our team and went on again.

But as for Billie, I did not see him again for two years. Strange rumors were afloat concerning in the meantime; and once he was reported as having stolen horses at three different places, widely apart, at the same time, which goes to prove the truth of the adage, "Give a dog a bad name, and you may as well hang him."

* * * * * *

A cold-blooded murder had been committed on the Georgetown gold-diggings, and the police wanted a man named M'Donell, badly for it. Indeed, he had committed more than one murder, but as he was well known to be a desperate and dangerously reckless man, those who were inclined to assist the law were chary about meddling with him.

Since the Georgetown murder, the police had been scouring the country everywhere but then, Australia is quite a respectable-sized hiding-place, and nothing had been heard of him.

It was late in the afternoon, in the month of October, and I had occasion to visit a distant part of our main paddock fence, some ten miles away from the head-station. This fence ran parallel to the only track (that is, trail or road) in that part of the country, which was the Port Darwin track, but was some miles off it.

I was alone; and, strange to say, contrary to my wont, had left my revolver behind. I was pacing along easily, admiring the beauty of the evening, and thinking of nothing in particular, when amongst the trees, some hundred yards outside the fence, I observed the glimmering of a fire. Blacks or white men? At least it would not be difficult to see; so putting my horse at the fence, I took the top-rail neatly. This practice of mine—always teaching my horse to jump—was to stand me in good stead yet.

White men at the "Yellow water-hole"—but what were they doing so far off the track? In another minute I had ridden right in amongst them, and unthinkingly jumped off my horse. In another minute I would have given all I possessed to have been on his back again, and anywhere but in that company.

There were three men, and they had neither seen nor heard me approach. One was stooping over the fire in the act of taking a damper from the ashes; and the other two were sitting with their backs against a fallen tree, evidently enjoying a smoke. However, I stammered out "Good-evening, mates," and tried to look as if I were glad at having dropped across them.

Then I experienced a chilling sensation of dismay: for as the two men leaped to their feet, I immediately recognised the notorious M'Donell, as bloodthirsty and unprincipled a wretch as ever. There was no mistaking him; the same bill that offered the five hundred pounds reward that would lead to his capture described him too fully.

There was the bluish scar right across the left cheek; the cruel, shifty black eyes, and the coarse, animal face. The second man, Smythe—M'Donell's companion in crime—was not an unhandsome man, but still evil-looking. They were both men who would think no more of shooting any one who stood between them and liberty than they would think of crushing a spider. But, suddenly, the third man turned, and I saw who it was—Billie Main. He looked somewhat anxious for a minute when he recognised me; but suddenly his brow cleared and he came forward.

Now, I confess that though Billie bore none of the best of characters—indeed the reverse—I was somewhat relieved at seeing him there. I could not help thinking that there was a something about him, in spite of his unenviable reputation, which hinted at his not being destitute of common humanity.

I had a pretty shrewd guess that M'Donell and Smythe, divining I had recognised them, would not care about letting me go back again to civilisation, knowing that the police were somewhere in the neighborhood.

Oh, how foolish I appeared in my own eyes, having come out without my revolver! I was in an awkward fix, truly. I saw the two first-mentioned men slip their hands down towards their revolver pouches. Then M'Donell, looking around to see if I were alone, sang out:

"Hillloa! mister, what the dickens do you mean by riding into a man's camp like this, and making so mighty free?"

But here Billie came to my assistance, for with a ready laugh and shaking me heartily by the hand, he said to M'Donell:

"It's all right, Dan; it's Dick Holmes, one of the boys, and one of the right sort—I'll answer for him. He's head-stockman to old 'T. B.,' and minds his own business. I'll go bail he'll keep his mouth shut."

Inwardly I blessed Billie's presence of mind and tact; so seeing that my only chance of being allowed to leave that company was by playing a part and conciliating them, I tied up my horse alongside one of theirs that stood saddled, hard by, and said to M'Donell:

"A nice sort of reception you'd give a man, mate. But I'll forgive you if you give me a drink of tea and a fill of tobacco. I came away without any this morning, and have been riding all day. Ah! that's better"—this to M'Donell, who had indicated the billy alongside the fire, with an inclination of his head.

I took a drink of tea and cut a fill of tobacco from the plug that Smythe handed me. Now, hospitality of this nature is as much a sacred rite with the Australians as the breaking of bread is with the people of the East, so I felt somewhat more at my ease.

I could not help admiring Billie's cunning; for after one glance at me that was full of meaning, he talked as if he had known me for years, and in a way that, had any enlightened party overheard, would have seriously compromised my character.

Of course I saw his drift, which was to impress his comrades with the idea that I was the last man in the world to go talking about their whereabouts. I must confess that his evident anxiety to put me in a good light in their eyes, struck me with a rather unpleasant significance.

For desperate men all three, and with the shadow of the gallows resting over two of them, was it likely that they would let me, a comparative stranger, walk right out of their camp, perhaps right into a police one, and 'give them away,' just when they were within some thirty miles of the northern territory boundary line, past which the Queensland police might not follow them?

And all the time I could see M'Donell was turning over something in his mind. Only once did I catch the restless glint of those ferret-like, black eyes, and they convinced me that there was little chance of leaving that camp alive, if he only took it into his head that I was not to be trusted.

As it was, he and Smythe observed a disconcerting silence, and I replied and talked to Billie in a strain that it is to be hoped I shall never require to adopt again when talking to any one. Let a man's life be at stake, however, and he will do many a thing his conscience condemns.

And after all, I frankly confess to being no hero. It helps to keep me from having any inordinate opinion of myself now, when I think that, had a stranger heard me talking then, he would have thought I was a fit companion for Billie and his mates.

But it would not do to stop in that camp too long, or they might mistake my motives. Besides I was becoming all the time more nervous on account of the peculiarly sinister manner of M'Donell and Smythe, and was anxious to have it over—such as it might be.

And now the go-go-burra or laughing-jackass had begun his noisy cachinnation, as he does first thing in the morning and just before sundown.

Innumerable tree-frogs, and members of the insect world, now that the sun was getting lower and the air became cooler began to make the Australian forest instinct with strange sounds, the like of which can only be heard in a tropical forest at night-fall.

Flocks of screeching parrots and parrakeets, many-hued pigeons, and noisy leather-heads, swooped down to drink at the water-hole as if oblivious of our presence; and the graceful fronds of palms, with their lace-like tracery, became darkly and sharply silhouetted against the gray sky.

It was a strange and significant fancy that struck me just then, that some of their drooping leaves resemble the nod-

ding plumes on a hearse. It is strange, but true, that in positions of the most imminent danger the most trivial details will impress themselves on one's mind.

But it was necessary that I should have daylight to leap back over the fence again, so I rose from the ground on which I had seated myself. I do not deny that it cost me an effort even to take this urgent step. It was no mere presentiment, but a palpable sense of imminent and impending danger that possessed me now.

"Well, mates, time I was going," I said. "By the way, if you want a "fifty" of flour, we can let you have it. Billie can come along with me, and I'll slip it out to him. No one need know who gets it. If you're going into the Territory, you may find it useful."

Billie jumped at the idea; but the other two silenced him. "They did not require it," they said. "In fact, they were nearer the station than they cared about."

I walked towards my horse. Now, I think there is no more disagreeable sensation than to turn your back to a man and think that he is meditating putting a bullet into you. You dare not look round for fear you may precipitate the action; and you feel a cold, creepy sensation running down your spine, as if some one were pouring cold water down your back.

It is a horrible thing to think that you may be launched into eternity at any moment without preparation. My fingers were twitching nervously as I untied the reins from the tree, and prepared to mount.

The three men had drawn together; but I could not look at them. How utterly at their mercy I was then! Just as I put my left foot into the stirrup, there was a sudden movement — an imprecation — the "ping" of a pistol.

"Zip!"—a bullet buried itself in the bark of a tree close to my head, and M'Donell exclaimed: "Curse you, Billie, you've spoiled the shot!"

I sprang into the saddle, just in time to see Billie endeavoring to prevent M'Donell from firing again.

"Hold hard, my hearty!" cried the latter. To lie well forward on my horse, and dig my heels well into his flanks, was the work of a second. Like a bolt shot from a crossbow, "Eclipse" sprang forward and dashed away through the scrub.

Ping! ping! ping!—something like a red-hot needle being thrust through my left arm, and a shot that made the blood spurt from the neck of my poor horse.

A narrow shave, truly! I was now running some hundred yards from the fence and parallel to it.

In another minute I heard the dull, quick thud of a horse's hoofs behind me. Looking back, I saw M'Donell, hatless, evil-looking, and with a revolver in his right hand, tearing after me, mounted on the horse I had seen tied up in the camp. I knew now that he meant to get close up alongside me so as to make sure work of both me and "Eclipse."

Oh, if I could only have had a weapon of some sort in my hand to have faced that fiend! But strategy was my only hope. "Eclipse" was a jumper, and nothing more. I knew it was only a question of time till M'Donell was alongside.

It was a mad, wild ride. Trees and bushes flew past at express speed. Like a man who has been snatched from the jaws of death by drowning, I can still recall distinctly every soul-harrowing, every complex, pertinent and trivial thought that coursed through my brain just then. I can remember speculating on the theories of the Greek philosopher regarding the soul after death; even wondering if the hands at the station would find my lifeless body, provided M'Donell did not burn it. I can remember thinking that this neck-or-nothing ride of mine resembled one I had read of in some old German legend, or Tam o' Shanter's by the waters of Doon. But the Scottish farmer's gray mare had a good hard road to stretch her limbs on, while poor "Eclipse" had to dash and dodge through treacherous forest country.

I looked once over my shoulder, and saw the ugly face of M'Donell with a wicked grin upon it. He was gaining upon me at every stride, and there was a deadly glitter in his cold, black eyes—no mercy there. Another hundred yards, and then his horse would be close upon mine. Now for a supreme effort.

Quick as thought I pulled "Eclipse" over to the right, and M'Donell shot past with a curse. Now for the fence. I bent low, and shouted to my horse; it was neck or nothing, life or death. M'Donell had wheeled and was close upon me. Would he follow, or would he shoot? My heart was in my mouth, but "Eclipse" took the top-rail in that waning light like a bird—and cleared it. Bravo, "Eclipse!"

Clatter—c-r-rash!

I looked back. M'Donell's horse had jumped foul of the top rail, and striking it, pitched wildly, rolling over and over again with its rider. There was an explosion: M'Donell had shot himself with his own revolver in the fall, and lay like a bundle of rags on the ground. When I picked him up he was stone dead—gone to answer for his crimes before a higher tribunal than any man could arraign him at.

I rode to the station, and found the troopers there. Hurrying back we surprised Smythe, who had followed up and discovered his dead mate. He was too much stunned and taken aback to make much of a resistance, and in two minutes the cold, gleaming handcuffs were on his wrists.

But Billie had fled the camp; doubtless apprehensive of M'Donell's anger for his interference on my behalf. I confess to having been glad of this. Poor Billie! he was meant for better things; he was at least not one of those on whom a kindly meant action is thrown away.

THE FRIENDLY ENEMY.—General John B. Gordon, of the Confederate Army, was riding at the head of his advancing division upon the field of Gettysburg, during the Civil War, when he saw directly in front of his horse the body of a Union officer who was apparently dead. He checked the speed of his charger, and, looking more closely, observed that the man's eyes and lips moved, and that there was still life in him.

Dismounting, he placed a knapsack under his head, gave him a drink from his flask, and, as he revived a little, expressed sorrow at his condition, told his own name, and asked the sufferer's, saying he would be glad to do anything he could to aid him. The reply came faintly:

"Thank you, General. I am Brigadier-General Barlow, of New York. You can do nothing more for me; I am dying." After a moment's pause however, he added, "Yes—you can. My wife is at the headquarters of General Meade. If you survive the battle, please let her know that I died doing my duty." General Gordon answered, "Your message, if I live, shall surely be given to your wife. Can I do nothing more for you?"

Again there was a pause, and then the desperately wounded general—he was shot through the chest — directed his friendly enemy to feel inside the left pocket of his blood-soaked coat, where he would find a packet of letters. General Gordon did so. He added, "Now please take out one and read it to me. They are from my wife. I wish that her words shall be the last I hear in this world."

Resting on one knee at his side, General Gordon, with tears in his eyes, complied; and, as the loving letter from a noble and patriotic wife came to an end, General Barlow once more thanked him, and begged him to complete his kindness by tearing up the packet, that it might not fall into other hands. This too was done; and, with a final pressure of the hand, the two men separated, and the Confederate joined his command, which had passed on.

Unwilling to leave his promised message to Mrs. Barlow to the chance of his own life being spared in the conflict then opening, he penned a hasty note on the pommel of his saddle and handed it to a young officer, whom he bade tie a white handkerchief on his sword and make straight for the Union lines; and he was soon informed that this order had been obeyed, and that the Union officer to whom the note had been delivered had promised to send it immediately to its address.

Eleven years later, General Gordon, then a senator of the United States, was present at a dinner-party in Washington, when his host introduced him to a gentleman whom he called General Barlow. The senator inquired, "Are you a relative of the General Barlow, a gallant soldier, who was killed at Gettysburg?"

"I am the General Barlow who was killed at Gettysburg," was the surprising reply, "and you are the General Gordon who succored me." So indeed it proved. The note sent from the battle-field to the faithful wife had saved a life as well as satisfied sentiment, for it stated that her husband was then lying dangerously wounded on the field, and she had not rested until, at the peril of her own life, she had sought and found him, and had had him borne him to a place of safety, and given the surgical attention and womanly nursing which triumphed at length over a seemingly mortal wound.

"THE HARE IN THE MOON."—The legend of "The Hare in the Moon" has left its marks in every quarter of the globe, and is the hunter's symbol. The people of Ceylon relate this myth. While Buddha, the great god, sojourned upon the earth, he one day lost his way in a wood. He had wandered for a long time, when a hare accosted him.

"Cannot I help thee? Strike into the path on thy right. I will guide thee out of the wilderness."

"Thank thee," replied Buddha; "but I am poor and hungry, and unable to repay thy kindness!"

"If thou art hungry," said the hare, "light a fire, and kill, roast and eat me."

Buddha made a fire, and the hare immediately jumped into the flames. Then Buddha snatched the beast out of the fire and set him in the moon, where he may be seen to this day.

Francis Douce, the antiquary, adds, from information given by a learned French gentleman, that the Cingalese would often request him to permit them to look for the hare through his telescope, and would exclaim rapturously that they saw it.

The Mongolian also sees a hare in the lunar shadows. The connection established in Chinese legend between the hare and the moon is traceable to an Indian original. The hare myth is said to be especially visible at mid-autumn.

Cæsar tells us that the Britons did not regard it as lawful to eat the hare; and in Swabia children are still forbidden to make shadows on the wall to represent the sacred hare of the moon.

The same mythology exists in Mexico among the Toxcucans, who are described by Prescott as surpassing the Aztecs in intellectual culture and the arts of social refinement. So that the fancy of "a hare in the moon" is universal.

HOW TO CURE TROUBLE.—Work is your true remedy. If misfortune hits you hard, hit you something else hard; go at something with a will. There is nothing like good, solid, absorbing, exhausting work to cure trouble. If you have met with losses, you do not want to lie awake thinking about them. You want sweet, calm, sound sleep, and to eat your dinner with appetite. But you cannot unless you work.

There are some great troubles that only time heals, and perhaps some that can never be healed at all; but all can be helped by the great panacea, work. Try it, you who are afflicted. It is not a patent medicine. It is an official remedy. All good physicians in regular standing prescribe it in cases of mental and moral disease. It operates kindly and well, leaving no disagreeable or ill effects. It will cure more complaints than any nostrum in the Materia Medica, and comes nearer to being a "cure-all" than any drug or compound of drugs in the market; and it will not sicken you if you do not take it sugar coated.

HINTS FOR BOYS.—A gentleman advertised for a boy to assist him in his office, and nearly fifty applicants presented themselves before him. Out of the whole number he selected one, and dismissed the rest.

"I should like to know," said a friend, "on what ground you selected that boy without a single recommendation?"

"You are mistaken," said the gentleman—"he has a great many. He wiped his feet when he came in, and closed the door after him, showing that he was careful—gave up his seat to that lame old man, showing that he was kind and thoughtful; he took off his cap when he came in, answered my questions promptly and respectfully, showing that he was polite and gentlemanly; he picked up a book, which I had purposely laid upon the floor, and replaced it on the table, while all the rest stepped over it or shoved it aside; and he waited quietly for his turn, instead of pushing or crowding, showing that he was honest and orderly.

"When I talked with him, I noticed that his clothes were carefully brushed, his hair was in nice order, and his teeth were as white as milk; and, when he wrote his name, I noticed that his fingernails were clean, instead of being tipped with jet like that handsome little fellow's in the blue jacket.

"Don't you call such things letters of recommendation? I do; and I would give more for what I can tell about a boy by using my eyes for ten minutes than all the letters of recommendation he can give me."

Scientific and Useful.

INDESTRUCTIBLE FIRE.—Paper indestructible by fire has been invented in Paris. A specimen of it was subjected to a severe test—148 hours in a potter's furnace—and came out with its glaze almost perfect.

WOOD.—If wood is treated properly, it may be moulded in blocks in the shape of bricks. An hotel has been built in Hamburg entirely of compressed wood as hard as iron, and rendered absolutely proof against fire and the attacks of insects by subjection to chemical processes.

BRICKS.—It appears the red brick is not considered sufficiently artistic, and in its place we are furnished with the brick of lighter hue—pink, buff, yellow, and, in fact, of nearly every shade. A brick can be made that is as mottled as a seagull's egg, or one that will show the varying tints of an autumn leaf.

VARNISHES.—Turpentine varnishes are prepared by dissolving the softer resins, such as common rosin, mastic, etc., in the best commercial oil of turpentine. They are mostly lighter in color than oil-varnishes; they dry quickly, but the surface of dry varnish produced is less durable than that obtained with oil-varnishes.

FOLDING OPERA GLASS.—A folding opera glass is planned somewhat on the idea of the little folding botanical magnifiers, and is formed of a flat stem, with thumb-screw extension, and two cross-pieces, each holding two lenses, and each hinged so as to be capable of folding down at right angles flat upon the stem. The glasses will go in an ordinary card-case.

ARTIFICIAL MARBLE.—Artificial marble is produced by the following process. Ten parts of burnt gypsum and one part of alum are mixed together in a little water, calcined, and then reduced to a powder. To twenty-five parts of the powder are added twenty-two parts of talc, five parts of chloride of magnesium, forty-four parts of clay, and one part of potassium alum. The mixture can be worked, polished, or painted like marble.

Farm and Garden.

ONIONS.—Onions can easily be kept good through the year. Choose the best and firmest, especially in January or February, and hang them in nets in some room or chimney where they can be exposed to good wood-fire smoke. After three or four days of this treatment, they can be put into the ordinary store-room. The taste or flavor will not be affected, but they will be kept from going bad and from running to seed.

CHRYSANTHEMUM CULTURE.—February or March is a good time to put in cuttings. Select the short shoots from the base of the plant, bare the leaves well, of the cuttings,—insert them into flats of half-leaf-mould and sand,—place the flats on a bench near the glass with no bottom heat, temperature 45 by night. If the sun is too strong during the middle of the day, slight shading will be beneficial. They should be well rooted in four weeks; then they should be potted into three inch pots,—compost one-third loam, one leaf-mould and one sand. When the pots are filled with roots, shift into six-inch pots of two-thirds rotten sod and one third rotten cow manure that has been dried and rubbed down. They should be fit, by the middle of June, to be put into their flowering pots.

SULPHUR.—While sulphur is indispensable for sheep as furnishing one of the important elements of the fleece, it must be given in such a way as to be available for this purpose. It must be in the food. It cannot be given in the crude form, in which it is not a food, but an active medicine, producing a laxative action on the bowels and an excessive exertion through the skin. It is this which makes it useful as an antidote to all kinds of parasites, the sulphur thus passing through the skin being extremely offensive to all insects. But its action on the skin is to open the pores and thus make the animal more subject to changes of the weather, and especially to injury by rains. It is thus not desirable to give sulphur as food or nutriment except in the food, such as white mustard or any other plant of the turnip and cabbage tribe.

IF DURING the past Sixty Years and longer Dr. D. Jayne's Expectorant has been bringing relief to the thousands who have used it for Bronchitis, Asthma, &c., would it not be wisdom for you to give it a trial now? It has cured others, why not you? The best family Pill, Jayne's Painless Sugar Coated Sanative.

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Thoughts of Youth.

As we grow older, we get separated more and more from our former selves, in sympathy as well as in years. The young man of twenty-five can hardly credit his follies when he was but seventeen, and the man of forty will blush as he recalls the ridiculous figure he cut on occasion when he was five-and-twenty. The man is fortunate who escapes this growing out of sympathy with youth and keeps his heart always young and sensitive to the thoughts of those who are just beginning to take their places in the world.

For do but cast your memory back faithfully over those days, and see how good they were—every minute became an hour and every hour a day, so crowded were the moments with incidents and schemes and ideas. If satisfaction could be weighed by avoirdupois, the first month after one enters upon the career which is to make one an independent citizen, if not to bring fame and wealth, would, put into one scale, make the other kick the beam, though weighted with years of dull routine. It is the time when one does not understand the meaning of the word "failure," and when prospective success and distinction are more tangible by far than they are when realized in after years.

Looked at purely as a matter of present enjoyment, it is a rare advantage to see only the bright side of things. The part that imagination plays in early life is not sufficiently recognized by us when we get worn and dulled by time. As the hypochondriac suffers actually from nothing but imagined evil, so the diseased man, believing himself to be thoroughly sound and in robust health, is, as far as his immediate enjoyment of existence is concerned, almost as well off as if he had no malady.

It is quite easy to youth to live outside itself in imagination and to enjoy the future with more relish than will be felt when all the hoped-for possibilities have transformed themselves into realities. The "fool's paradise" runs a risk of being too much maligned; it is necessary to define it more exactly before we pour contempt upon it.

If it leads a man into dangers that he might otherwise escape, and keeps him away from pleasant paths that he might otherwise tread, it can, of course, claim no word in its favor; but, if, instead of working any change in his condition, it merely blinds his eyes to the dull and ugly, and opens them to the picturesque and charming—if it keeps from him a little longer the foreknowledge of inevitable danger, giving him a lease of hope and brightness while he grows strong to face the long and steady strife—is it not a desirable element of life, a condition to be encouraged rather than to be condemned? It is in this light that one is inclined to look upon the uncontrolled illogical enthusiasm of the boy who is just entering upon what are called the serious duties of life. To the boy of imagination and ambition—qualities seldom wanting in lads—it is a time crammed full of something more than possibilities.

Whatever the direction in which the fancy may lead—to well-lined pockets simply, to distinctions which rank higher than wealth, to social position, to power, or perhaps to untrumpeted achievements, remunerative only in self-satisfaction—the goal is almost always high—so high that probably only a few years are necessary to carry it completely out of the range of Ambition's vision.

Whether he starts in life as an errand-boy or as a military cadet, on the most modest office-stool or in the drab classroom of the student, it does not matter, the goal is proportionately distant from the beginning; it is the farthest point to which the boy's imagination can run on the line along which he sets out. That the errand-boy definitely believes he will work his way up until he first of all becomes a confidential clerk or trusted assistant, and afterwards—quite in the good old style—marries his employer's daughter and becomes a partner in a flourishing business, or that the law-student seriously imagines he is destined to sit on the bench, is saying too much. He would rather perhaps vaguely hint to himself, "This thing may be." He would admit that circumstances might intervene to leave him somewhat short of the mark; but he would, so to speak, put the thing on his programme, and acknowledge—to himself—the possibility of the highest.

Yet, with all his self-assurance, the boy does not take the world into his confidence. These are secrets of the heart, only to be unfolded tentatively and with qualifications to one's bosom-friend, if at all. It is not mistrust of oneself, but mistrust of the opinions of others that leads to this reticence. The boy not only fears want of sympathy; he often has a warrantable disbelief in the wisdom of his seniors with regard to matters affecting his own career.

Like people of an older growth, he is inclined to think that the circumstances which surround him may be unique, and that it is premature to assume that he is a gander to whom the sauce necessary for other geese is to be applied. Nor is he altogether wrong in his reasoning; for there is nothing on which one goes farther astray than on an estimate of another's capacities and possibilities.

There is something tantalizing in the way in which the seniors look on with any amount of worldly wisdom, ready to disabuse the enthusiast of his ideas if opportunity offers. They would not be harsh enough to call him a fool for his thoughts, but they are always ready to let him down gently from the height from which he is taking his outlook and to lead him to understand that the pretty pictures whereon he has been gazing with so much rapture are only shadow shows, intangible, evanescent. They are so severely logical in their reasoning! "This boy," they say, "is dreaming of things which can never be realized; he is wasting valuable energy in foolish wonderings. Let him be taught to look practically at life, and he will be saved disappointments, and will make more easy progress in remunerative paths."

We are liable to forget, when thinking of the youth, that it is unsafe to judge from our own experiences. You may have been turned aside by some accident at a moment when the slightest alteration in the conditions would have led you into an altogether different path.

Do but look back over your own life and try to recall the trivial accidents—as they seem to be—which have moulded your career for better or for worse. Perhaps, with abundant faith in yourself, you have been diffident in recommending your capabilities to others. Your path has lain among unsympathetic or well-intentioned but mistaken people, who have touched you on a sensitive point, and have made you draw back into yourself.

On the other hand, you may have had the good fortune to meet with those who have appraised you at your worth, and have given you the one chance which has afforded a stepping-stone to a position you could not otherwise have attained. The story of one's own life is full of hints for one's treatment of others, if one will but reflect; but the hints do not favor hard-and fast rules.

Sympathy is above worldly wisdom. By it alone can youth be directed. It costs nothing, and rewards the subject and the object alike. Careless indifference or superior contempt, on the other hand, may kill enthusiasm in others at a time when it is most sensitive; and the harm done is irreparable. "The thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts," wrote Longfellow. It is only those who know the meaning of the line who are able to place themselves alongside the young and help them naturally.

THERE is a fallacious custom of thinking that what we do for ourselves ends with self. Many children who are brought up in habits of cleanliness and temperance, who early learn to take care of their health and exert their faculties, have no other motive presented to them than their own good. Yet nothing is clearer than that all these things tend also to their value to others; and this motive should never be overlooked. It is no abstract theory; nor is it difficult so to present it to the young mind and weave it into the young life as to give a higher meaning to all that is done for personal welfare.

HOPE has always been the light to man's feet on the rugged path of existence. Whatever be the present circumstances, it has always a word of cheer by pointing to brighter and better conditions in the future. It is like an angel standing on the narrow bridge of the present, holding a powerful light illuminating the future and the past. It has always said, "Learn from the past, act in the living present, trust to the future." Hope indulged in abstinently is a source of power. Hope used inordinately is a source of unreasonable intoxication and loss of strength.

HE who wishes to escape the morbid current of his thoughts and fears should select some one pursuit and involve himself in action concerning it. Of all such occupations gardening is the most wholesome and engrossing. Gardening gives exercise to the body and mind alike, and, though mainly an out-of-door pursuit, it also gives some employment under cover.

THE fountain of content must spring up in the mind. He who has so little knowledge of human nature so to seek happiness by changing anything but his own disposition will waste his life in fruitless efforts, and multiply the griefs which he wishes to remove.

THE truly spiritual nature is a personal endowment found in individuals of every creed, especially belonging to no one creed in distinction from others. It is a divine gift—like an ear for music, which some—not all—are born with.

WHATEVER you are from nature, keep to it; never desert your own line of talent. Be what nature intended you for and you will succeed. Be anything else and you will be ten thousand times worse than nothing.

REMEMBER that, if the opportunities for great deeds should never come, the opportunity for good deeds is renewed for you day by day. The thing for us to long for is the goodness, not the glory.

MAN'S noblest gift to man is his sincerity, for in addition it embraces his integrity.

CONFIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENTS.

DELECTUS.—We can discover no better reason for firing three volleys over the grave of a soldier than for giving three cheers. The number is supposed to be a happy one.

J. S. M.—Rusty-nail water will generally remove freckles. If that fail, try glycerine diluted with borax water. Apply to the face just before retiring at night, and let it dry on the skin.

P. M. M.—The swelling caused by the stings of hornets, wasps, bees, and spiders, may be generally arrested by the application of common salt and bicarbonate of soda (a teaspoonful of each) dissolved in warm water, and well rubbed in on the place bitten or stung.

SIBELLA.—Girls make a common mistake in believing their sweethearts to be "firm young men," and stronger than they. As a rule, a girl of twenty is much wiser and more advanced than a boy of twenty. Hence she should rather depend on her own sense of right and wrong, and not credit every word she hears.

M. V. W.—The Hebrews and Greeks used the first nine letters of their alphabet for the numbers 1 to 9; the next nine letters for 10, 20, etc., to 90; and the others for hundreds; while for thousands they recommenced the alphabet and added to each letter a mark or iota. The Romans followed a similar system, beyond which we cannot enlighten you.

W. H.—Most of the nations of Europe had a festival celebrating the winter solstice, and expressing exultation at the beginning of the annual victory of the sun. When these nations were converted to Christianity, instead of abolishing the old heathen festival, they gave it a Christian meaning, just as some of the old temples were turned into churches.

G. H. H.—The only way to learn anything of value about human nature is to mix with men and women, to work with them for the attainment of common ends, to help them in trouble, and to get help from them. Of course, a sensible man may gain much by reading such masterpieces as the novels of Thackeray and George Eliot, or the plays of Shakespeare; but you might as well try to learn oratory without speaking as try to learn human nature without every-day contact in the actual business of life with your fellow men.

ARKIOS.—Malleable iron exists in bars. The mass of metal is beaten or squeezed after extraction from the puddling furnace, and then rolled out into bars. The iron used for making malleable iron is superior to that used for casting, being to some extent refined. The term "wrought" will probably, as you employ and describe it, be applied to iron that has passed through a more advanced process than the mere rolling into bars, which as to say, simply prepares the material to be wrought into shape and developed by heating and beating.

POET.—The Law was given to Moses long after Noah, as may be seen by reference to the text. Therefore no question of Noah's flood can arise in connection with the preservation of the tables. They certainly do not, or are not known to, exist now, though tradition, according to Dr. Krapff, still preserves them in Abyssinia, a gift from Solomon to the Queen of Sheba; and the first tables were, as the narrative states, broken. Rest assured the authorized version of the Scriptures contains all that it is needful for man to know that he may walk wisely and well on the earth.

R. H. M.—Orsini, the Italian revolutionist, who went to Paris in 1857 to assassinate Napoleon III., had three associates, named Pieri, Rudio and Gomez. On the evening of Jan. 14, 1858, as the emperor and empress were approaching the Grand Opera, three bombs were thrown under their carriages and exploded, killing or wounding a large number of persons, though the intended victims escaped. Orsini, Pieri and Rudio were sentenced to death, and Gomez to hard labor for life. The sentence in regard to Orsini and Pieri was carried out, but the life of Rudio was spared through the intercession of the Empress Eugenie.

LITTLE.—Questions bearing upon practical life are the most interesting, but, unfortunately, the debates sometimes get so animated that things are said which the speakers afterwards regret. If you can keep your tempers you may discuss Socialism under the form of such resolutions as, "Resolved, that the rights of private property cannot be seriously impaired without injury to the community;" or, "Resolved, that State interference with private enterprise is hurtful." Free trade, woman suffrage, prohibition, local option, and license can all be discussed in the same way. Historical and literary subjects are very useful, on account of the reading which they induce.

S. H. M.—Belize, or British Honduras, is a British colony of Central America, having an area of 9,000 square miles. The coast is low and swampy, fenced from the open sea by lines of keys and islands. The western frontier is mountainous, and dense forests abound. Mahogany, logwood, and sugar are the chief exports, while agriculture receives but little attention. The climate is hot, moist, and unhealthy for white people, although there are few epidemics and earthquakes, and hurricanes are unknown. The colony has a Lieutenant-Governor, a Legislature, and a Privy Council. The country is divided into three districts—Northern, Belize and Southern. The chief towns are Belize, the capital, and Corozal in the extreme north. The population is about 25,000, mostly negroes.

MIDNIGHT.

BY LOUISE MALCOM STENTON.

'Tis midnight, and the silent skies
Gleam bright with sparkling stars
That almost seem like angels' eyes,
While naught their beauty mars.

In vain I woo the God of sleep,
He comes not at my call;
I fain would smile; but still I weep,
For friends beyond recall.

Thoughts swiftly flit across my brain,
Of vanished, happier days,
Where dear ones banished all my pain,
And o'er me shed Love's rays.

Sometime, I cannot tell how soon,
The fiend called Death will come
And bring me sleep, that blessed boon—
In my eternal home!

In the Garden.

BY J. C. L.

ON a golden afternoon in the month of February, 18—, the sun was shining down hotly upon the orange and lemon trees of an old garden in the interior of Morocco; the river, divided into channels for purposes of ablution, was flowing peacefully through the part where the shade was thickest, birds were singing, and the different members of the household were lotus eating, each in the fashion which pleased him best.

Some had chosen rocking-chairs, others lay full length on a carpet spread over the tiles which surrounded the fountain, two were in hammocks slung by the waterside.

It was a Bohemian household, as might be expected: the cook, white-robed and majestic, just in from the market, was leaning back in an arm chair in the dining room, exchanging confidences with a slave of the male gender, a splendid specimen, some six feet high, as black as ebony, and especially told off as nurse to the baby, who was contentedly holding on to his ear with a fat, white, dimpled hand.

From the windows of the room there was a glorious view over the broad valley through which the river wandered, and in the background rose row after row of deep blue mountains, a white peak showing here and there in the far distance; the gray old city which lay at their feet was dotted with tall green minarets, from which the call to prayer resounded six times a day with unceasing regularity.

It was a fanatical city, of course, and the presence of Christians was barely tolerated in its streets unless they assumed the flowing robes and picturesque garb of its rightful owners, or wore a foreign uniform; in the latter case they were feared as well as hated. How or why the household I am about to tell of came to be in its midst matters not to the story.

"Has it ever struck you, Charley," the young hostess was saying to her husband, "that it is rather an odd thing, even in Morocco, to shut a good-looking and unmarried girl of nineteen up in a garden, where, excepting myself, the only companions she is likely to have for the next three months are three unmarried men? It seems to me a proceeding likely to cause complications."

"Possibly. But I do not see how we are to help it; when we invited Molly we did not expect any one else but Monro this winter, and as I like you to have a girl to speak to, and we all seem very happy together, don't you think we had better let things take their course?"

"The manners and customs of the country are beginning to affect you, Charley. But we have undertaken a certain amount of responsibility in inviting Molly here. I love her dearly, and would not part with her on any account, but I can't help knowing that Captain Morland and Mr. Elton are always in attendance. I am only too thankful that as yet Major Monro has not entered the lists, but when General Nugent keeps writing such grateful letters about what he calls our kindness to his daughter, one feels, somehow, a little guilty sometimes."

"He knows they are staying with us; I told him. But the problem is too difficult for me to solve, my dear Marjory; I leave it to your wiser though younger head. No doubt, as you suggest, the materials for a very pretty kettle of fish do exist here just now. I am, however, going to fetch the baby.

"What has aroused your indignation, Mrs. Colville?" inquired a tall fair man, approaching her slowly. "In this climate excitement might be fatal. Can I be of any use?"

"It is past tea time, and if you would ask Miss Nugent to come to me to consult over the means of getting it, I should be immensely obliged, Captain Morland."

He disappeared with unusual alacrity, the little lady noted, but then he was going to disturb a hated rival. Molly and Mr. Elton had been sitting together ever since lunch.

A bright girl with a very sweet expression came quickly up on hearing herself called.

"Yes, Marjory, did you say? Don't disturb yourself, Captain Morland and I will go and wake some of the people up."

After a while they reappeared, bearing cups and saucers and cake, one of the slaves following with the rest of the appointments; the others came up and seated themselves round the hostess. Mr. Colville remarked that he must ride over to a village some thirty miles away the next day, and would have to camp there for the night, returning the following morning.

Those who liked might ride part of the way with him, in fact two of them might come all the way to Ben Aouda—the place in question. He would take the usual armed escort, and three of them could go back with the ladies and whichever of their guests would take charge of them.

"Pray take care of yourself, Charley," said his wife. "I shall be very glad if some one will go all the way with you. I cannot endure your being left to the mercy of these men. I always expect something horrible will happen."

"All right. Then perhaps, Elton, you and Morland will come with me, and if Monro will go back with the ladies, I shall be awfully obliged. It is better for one of us to be here at night."

Each expressed his willingness to fall in with the plan, though Mrs. Colville announced that it was unlikely she would be of the party, as it might be too hot for the baby; besides, her "soultham"—the long cloak which entirely conceals the figure—had gone to be cleaned, and riding in European garments among so fanatical a people was not a desirable proceeding, though Molly would be able to go all the same.

Molly and Captain Morland strolled away together under the trees. Mrs. Colville looked slightly annoyed, and called her back on some transparent pretence. Molly saw through it, and turned with a smile to her companion, saying:

"Marjory is very anxious about my behavior. I can see it by the way she looks at me. I wish I could do something to reassure her. If she only knew it, I have not the slightest intention of proposing to anybody."

Captain Morland looked slightly shocked. He was a good fellow, but rather apt to take people too literally. If he had only had some slight sense of the ridiculous, he would have been so nice, Molly thought. As it was, it was one of her favorite distractions to say things to him which he thought unbefitting a woman.

"I am quite sure she never entertained such an idea for one moment," he replied seriously. "I wish she were not given to remarks like these," he was thinking to himself. "In every other respect she is exactly what a girl should be."

He was himself a most eligible parti, and most people would have thought it a pity that Molly did not try to please him a little more. But then they were in a country where girls were scarce.

Next day they all started for the proposed ride, with the exception of Mrs. Colville, who never cared much for such expeditions, and was not happy till her husband returned from them. It was a lovely morning and the riders set off in the highest spirits; even Major Monro, who as a rule never spoke, made a remark or two as to its beauty.

They looked more like a travelling circus than anything else, Mrs. Colville thought, as she watched the little procession file through the gates, so picturesque in appearance, so prosaic in reality.

Half a dozen soldiers, fully armed, rode in front of them. They halted for lunch towards mid-day, but at three o'clock Mr. Colville told Molly and the major it was time for them to set out for home, giving them many injunctions not to loiter by the way, as the city gates would be shut at six o'clock, and on no account to lose sight of their escort, for though their own get-up was unexceptionally Moorish, their speech would at once betray them if they met any parties out "on the raid."

They promised obedience, and turned their horses' heads towards the sunset. About an hour afterwards they came up with a large party of horsemen, wild and savage-looking, armed with clubs, and their kaid, magnificent in the richest attire, riding at their head.

Molly held her cloak carefully over her eyes, the only part of her face visible, so as not to attract attention. The kaid stopped one of the soldiers, and inquired if they were in charge of one of the sultan's ladies.

"Certainly," replied the man. "Do you not see her blue slippers?"

They passed on, and Mahmoud, the man addressed, told Major Monro that these were well-known robbers; he hoped that the Kaid Colville would not fall in with them. He had himself, as the major knew, belonged once to the "hillmen," therefore was able to speak as to their identity.

Just then a straggler came flying past them, and Molly's horse, which was occasionally somewhat restive, immediately started off in pursuit. To his horror, her companion saw the girl was being run away with; turning to the escort, he bade them ride slowly on while he went to fetch back the young lady.

She had evidently lost all control of the excited animal, and was soon out of sight. When he regained the other side of the hill the mule-tracks suddenly divided, one leading down a deep ravine, the other turning sharply and then ascending a mountain which appeared to be very steep.

He had not an idea which she had taken, but decided to try the ravine, spurred his horse to its utmost speed, and caught her up just as the man were surrounding her, intending to prevent her turning back. He dismounted, and seizing her bridle, with his revolver in the other hand, turned the animal's head round. The hillmen seemed to hesitate for a moment, exchanged a few words with each other, and then, to his intense relief, rode on.

"Are you all right?" he inquired somewhat anxiously.

"Yes, thank you. I don't mind being run away with, but certainly those horrid-looking men were unpleasant."

The two horses began to fight, so he remounted. The soldiers were out of sight, but they had been told, as was usual, that they would have to answer for the life and safety of their charge with their heads, so they would not be very far off.

He thought by ascending the mountain, instead of following the track, they could take a shorter cut, but when they reached the top they found themselves in a wide valley, and had, it was evident, mistaken the way.

"These places are so exactly like each other, and yet seem all to lead in widely different directions," he remarked at length. "That is the worst of a mountainous country without roads or paths."

Presently they came to a saint's tomb.

"We did not pass that this morning," said Molly. "If you recollect, the only tomb we came across was by the river, after we had forded it."

"True," he replied. "We must get up to the highest point we can find, and then we shall be able to see into the plain below, where our men must be waiting. It is very rough riding for you, though."

When they reached the summit of the hill they noticed two horsemen galloping quickly westwards.

"Those are none of our fellows, I know by the horses; besides, they have the long native guns. Well, we must make for the plain, anyhow."

He glanced at his watch; it was already five o'clock. Then it would be impossible for them to reach the city before the gates were closed, but he would not mention this new complication just yet. Some fresh mule and camel tracks became visible; the sun had disappeared behind one of the peaks of the range which formed a huge wall on their right.

They were riding now through a cemetery; the heaps of stones at regular intervals indicated graves, consequently there must be a village not far off, and certainly there was no human habitation on the right route to F————; after rounding the edge of a cliff, they saw a group of mud huts thatched with brush below them.

That they had lost their way was but too evident, and as he had this poor child with him, he dared not turn off into the village and inquire, even if he could have hoped to be understood. A horrible fear seized him that their escort had been set upon and maltreated, possibly worse, and there was, in that case, no doubt that they must pass the night as best they could out in the open.

Some minutes' reflection convinced him that the best plan would be for them to wait for a short time at the top of the hill, where their soldiers could not fail to see them, if they were in search of them, and if they did not turn up, then to ride back to the saint's tomb, just below which was the track which Mr. Colville and the others must follow on the next morning, when they would return from Ben Aouda.

He communicated the first part of his resolution to Molly, who stopped her horse as he desired. Fortunately they had had a long rest at mid-day and a good meal; the horses also had been watered and fed. No horsemen appeared in sight, however, though they waited patiently for some time. If he had only been alone! What was he to do with the girl at his side? She would get ill with the fatigue and the cold; moreover, it was getting dark and he must tell her.

"Molly," he said at last, quite unconscious that he had addressed her by her Christian name, "there is no doubt about it, we are benighted. I dare not take you into that village, neither could I make them understand that we want shelter, if I did. I think we must go back to that saint's tomb which we passed, if we can do it without being observed, tie up the horses to a tree, and make ourselves as comfortable as circumstances will permit us with our two saddles, waiting for the dawn. What a blessing that you have a shawl with you; my saddle cloth will do for a carpet, and as I have my revolver, you need have no fear. I am sure you are tired out, and you will be able to rest at least." He spoke as cheerfully as he could to reassure her, but in his own mind he felt many misgivings.

"You know best," she replied, and somehow with this strong, gentle-mannered man to take care of her the prospect did not seem so very alarming, after all, for she had been aware also for some time past that they could not reach home that night. "We shall not be disturbed in the darkness, because they are all afraid of their 'djins' at night."

"That's a brave girl; come along." They retraced their steps and soon gained the tomb he spoke of; both dismounted and, with the aid of the saddles and wraps, arranged two fairly comfortable seats. He fastened up the horses and then returned and placed himself at her side.

"I have a packet of biscuits which Marjory put inside my shawl," she remarked, "so we need not starve." Over the biscuits they became very friendly, and mindful of the long hours of probable wakefulness before them both, he thought the kindest thing he could do would be to try and make her talk to him; indeed he had long felt a desire to know Miss Nugent better, but as the other two men generally monopolised her and conversation was rather an effort to him, he had not, he thought, had the opportunity; he would improve it now.

"You know that your father and I were in the same regiment some years ago, about ten, I think; I must have seen you when you were a child?"

"Very likely. I have often heard him speak of you. What was that?" She seized his arm; the sound which was now audible to both of them was that of approaching footsteps. She rose to her feet and he did the same; the day had altogether been an exciting one for her, and the girl was tired out.

He put his arm round her to steady and reassure her, and listened intently. It sounded as if some one had approached the tomb, thrown something down and departed.

Major Monro feared the Arabs from the neighboring village had come to steal the horses, and if they themselves should be discovered in the tomb it would be looked on as an attempt at sacrilege, and murder was likely to be the result. Nothing but plunder would bring these people out at nightfall. All was silent again.

"I must go out and see if the horses are there," he whispered in her ear. "Will you come with me, or dare I leave you here? No one can come inside without my seeing them."

"Take me with you," she whispered back, "unless you think I had better stay; I will if you say so."

"No, you shall come, but the moon is up, so take off your muslin veil and the cord which fastens down your hood; pull the hood over your face as I do, and then by this light they cannot see you are not a boy, if you keep in the shadow of the wall of the tomb. Follow me as closely as you can."

He went cautiously out. But the horses were all safe, so far, and no human figure was to be seen; something had been thrown down beside a prickly pear bush a short distance off, though. He signed to

Molly to stand still where she was and went to look.

It was a head! A murder had evidently been committed, an event too terribly common in that country even to excite remark, but the sight of the ghastly trophy struck him with peculiar horror under the circumstances.

He feared it was one of their own escorts; anyhow, the child must not know. He returned to her and led the way back to the tomb.

"Had any one been up here, do you think?" she inquired anxiously.

"If so, they have evidently gone home again, and now we will settle down once more, only we must speak in whispers. If they return, they will then, if they overhear us, certainly think the 'djins' are about and give us a wide berth. I am going to take off my soulham and wrap it around you; I am sure you are perished with the cold."

"No, no. You would freeze without it, it is so thick, and I am really quite comfortable." Presently her head dropped, and he saw she had fallen asleep.

That was best, and he drew her wraps more closely round her; the tomb was built at the edge of a precipice, and no one could come up that way, so he could safely go out again and reconnoitre.

Taking his revolver in his hand, he went back to the prickly pear bush to see if he could recognize the features of the murdered man; one of their escort had been known to his host for many years, and for a Moor, was considered a trustworthy man, and would therefore be a great loss to them.

But the cursory inspection, which was all he could bring himself to make, told nothing; the features of the natives rarely showed any peculiarity in form or expression by which they could be individually recognized; it was not a negro, that was all he could ascertain.

Glancing back constantly at their temporary dwelling to see that no one came near, he went cautiously on to see that the horses were all right, but as a cloud suddenly hid the moon he did not linger, and returning to the door called Molly by name so as not to alarm her if she should awake.

No one answered, however, and he entered, feeling his way carefully in the obscurity. A sudden ray of moonlight illumined the place. Good God! she is not there!

He walked hastily round the white building, calling her name gently; there was no reply; unless she had been surprised and gagged with almost incredible quickness, and carried off during the few moments of comparative darkness, she must have awoke in his absence and followed him out.

There was a hedge of prickly pear a little farther down the hill and some wild olive trees; the clouds still obscured the moon, but he managed to find his way about; there was no sign of life, however.

After as thorough a search as it was possible to make, he recollected that the tomb overlooked a precipice, and that it was just possible some of the Arabs might have seen them enter and have concealed themselves below in order to surprise them, yet it had appeared in the dusky light after sunset when they first saw it to be too steep for any human being to climb. He approached the edge, and lying down, looked over and called her once more.

He fancied he heard a faint reply, and decided to try and find an easier descent as soon as the clouds passed over; eventually he managed to scramble down, and finding a foothold, reached what he thought was the place whence the sound had come.

He heard his name called. There she was, seated on the ground about fifty paces off; a deep sense of relief came over him, and he went quickly on.

"I woke up after you left me," she said as he reached her; "and not liking to be alone, thought I would follow you. I could not see where I was going, and just as I thought I was safely out of reach of the cliff, I fell over it. I managed to catch hold of the bushes and so saved myself from a bad fall. But I have twisted my foot. I am so sorry, for I am sure I have given you a bad fright."

"You did, indeed; but now I have found you, it is all right."

He raised her up, and after many vain attempts to walk, she consented to let him half carry, half drag her up the way he had come down, till they reached the tomb once more.

He was full of admiration for the brave girl, who was evidently suffering much, yet would not complain; she was so much younger than he, less than half his age, and looked such a child as she leant back against the inside of her saddle, too tired almost to speak.

"If you will try and sleep, like a good girl, I will promise not to leave you again," he said at last. "Or are you in too much pain?"

"I will try, anyhow. It was my own fault; I ought to have stayed here."

The night wore on, and at last a faint gray light announced the welcome approach of dawn. Major Monro leant over to look if Molly were sleeping, but met the glance of two bright wakeful eyes; her hair had escaped from her hood, and curled in rings about her forehead. He thought he had never seen a sweeter face. Would she think him too old, he wondered?

"Have you slept a little, you poor child?" he asked. "As soon as it is quite light we must leave this sacred edifice; it would never do to be seen here, and then we will make for Ben Aouda."

"Yes, I have slept, and my ankle is easier. I feel so dreadfully guilty, though, in being such a burden to you."

Major Monro felt a strong desire to kiss her, but immediately suppressed it, and remarked that he hoped he might never have a heavier one. He lifted her on her horse and they set out once more.

By seven o'clock the sun was shining hotly, and this cheered them up. Presently they heard a shout from above; Mr. Colville and his party had halted for breakfast, and was signing for them to join them.

When they heard what had befallen the two, Mr. Colville said that he had no doubt that his unfortunate men had been made away with in some way for the sake of their horses and arms; he felt very uneasy about his wife, who would, he feared, expect that something serious had happened, and the only thing to be done was to hurry back.

When they reached home they learned that the soldiers had been set upon by some marauders, one of their number had been murdered, but the other two had managed to escape.

"The tables are turned, Marjory," Mr. Colville remarked to his wife a fortnight after these occurrences, somewhat triumphantly. "It seems to me that Monro has discovered Molly's perfections, and the other two appear to be left out in the cold."

He was apparently right, for just at that moment the person mentioned was writing something on a leaf he had torn out of a note book, and when he had finished he handed it to Molly, who was standing by, for perusal.

Mr. Elton was there too, but not close to the others. It ran thus: "Come down into the garden for a minute. I want to ask you to be my wife."

Poor Molly blushed crimson, partly with indignation at being supposed capable of granting a request made in such terms. Major Monro did not find her once alone that day, and the next morning he took his host and hostess into his confidence; the latter, who highly approved, promised to manage it for him, and her husband remarked that he would take the other two men away that afternoon.

An engagement with somebody was apparently inevitable, and they knew that General Nugent and Monro were friends. It was impossible for the ladies ever to leave the grounds except on horseback, as only women of the lower class walk, and Mrs. Colville took care that her young guest's horse should not be forthcoming; the rest was easy.

"Hold baby for me while I call Mahmoud, Molly," she said after lunch, quite casually. The girl imagined that all the men had gone out, and complied with her friend's request.

Presently Mahmoud entered, black and shiny, and carried off his charge. He had no sooner done so than the person she least wished to see just then entered the room and walked straight up to her.

"Molly darling," he said, "is it all right?" But she could not answer, though she knew now there was no escape from this importunate person; eventually, however, he succeeded in getting her to look up at him for one brief moment, and then declared himself satisfied.

In thinking the matter over afterwards, Molly felt that she ought to have been displeased at so much being taken for granted, as she was not aware that she had ever done anything to lead him to suppose, etc., etc., but when she mentioned her view of the matter to the person most concerned he assured her that she had, though she might not be aware of it, which so incensed her that a very pretty little quarrel nearly resulted from that rash remark, and for at least two hours that day she declined to speak to him. But he managed to make his peace, and now they are the happiest couple in the regiment.

A Weird Warning.

BY O. L. B.

DOCTOR RAYMOND was a kind man. He was fifty-seven years of age, rather stout, and altogether comfortable in appearance. His eyes were soft and grey, his bushy whiskers of the same color. His chin and upper lip being clean-shaven, gave full play to the expression of sympathetic benevolence which his many friends knew and loved so well.

It is doubtful whether a large head is any indication of brain power, but the two were certainly combined in the person of Charles Raymond; for his broad brimmed white beaver would have slipped down to the nose of most men, while as to his ability—well, who had not heard of Doctor Raymond of Harley street, the eminent writer and lecturer on nervous disorders? Not in London only, but in the hospitals of Paris, Vienna and Berlin, the name of Charles Raymond, M. D., F. R. S., was known and respected by every member of the medical profession.

He had naturally a keen insight into character, and a power of observation which enabled him with an uncommon degree of accuracy to gauge the state of mind of those with whom he was brought into contact.

His success, indeed, was largely due to these gifts, while they had of course been greatly strengthened and developed by the study of that branch of medicine in which he had made himself a specialist.

One morning, when July was at its hottest, the doctor found on his breakfast-table a letter calling him suddenly into the country. He took a hurried breakfast, called a hansom, kissed his two daughters and drove off.

He had, however, ran it rather close, and it was but a minute to the starting time of the train when he arrived at Euston. He ran up the platform with his black bag in his hand, his loose frock-coat streaming behind him. The guards and porters standing by the doors of the carriages grinned as the portly gentleman with the great white beaver panted past them.

"Now then, sir, look sharp! time's up," shouted the guard as he banged the compartment doors. Doctor Raymond ran on, hoping to find an empty carriage, till he reached the end of the train, and then as it was beginning to move, he scrambled into the compartment next the engine without having time to look whether it were full or empty. Then, taking off his hat which he placed beside his bag on the seat, he wiped the prespiration from his forehead with his red silk handkerchief, and settled himself comfortably into the corner to read the Times.

But his eyes soon wandered from the print, fascinated at first by the rise and fall of the telegraph wires, then by the fields, farmsteads and rivers which flitted past, and then—by his travelling companion. Yes, fascinated! For Doctor Raymond was by no means proof against a pretty face.

And it was an undeniably pretty face he saw opposite him. The girl who owned it looked about twenty-one. She had an exceedingly light, clear complexion, with rather small but piquant features, except her eyes which were large, deep, dreamy, of a rich brown color guarded by long, dark lashes and finely pencilled eyebrows.

Her hair was of the same nut-brown as her eyelashes, but as the sunbeam struck upon her head through the carriage window, Doctor Raymond could see a tint of golden red glancing from beneath the smart little straw hat decked with corn-flowers.

The elderly doctor and the beautiful girl were alone together in the compartment, and the doctor was fascinated. But there was no harm in it. Dear good Doctor Raymond, leaving his wife and daughters in Harley street and bound on a tiresome and profitless errand of mercy, was in no danger whatever; but he was undoubtedly fascinated.

Not altogether—not even principally—by the girl's beauty, though he would have been sorry to be insensible to that. No, but there was something in he face as she gazed out of the carriage window, unconscious apparently of the doctor's presence, which made him feel that she would interest him from his special point of view.

It was not merely that she was evidently a clever girl; that her face indicated power of thought and imagination; but that he perceived in her signs of a finely strung nervous organization, a far away mystical look, which to his professional eye was, as Carlyle would say, "significant of much."

"I should like to ask her," he thought, "whether she has ever been hypnotised, and warn her against it. I hope she never will allow it. Heaven knows what might come of it."

At that moment the train which was not an express, stopped at a country-side station. Suddenly the girl gave a violent start and turned deadly pale. Doctor Raymond noticed it of course, but he supposed it might be due to her being suddenly weakened from her long reverie, and being disconcerted at finding that he had been watching her. Or, perhaps, he thought, the sun had been too strong on the back of her head. Lest this should be so, and in order to remove any embarrassment she might feel, he asked her in his most kindly manner if she would like the blind pulled down behind her, or the window a little further open.

Her paleness did not last, and the doctor could see that physically she was strong and well. But he noticed that her face, which, before their arrival at the station had seemed peculiarly happy and contented, now appeared uneasy, troubled, scared. What could possibly be the cause of this?

It occurred to him for a moment that perhaps she was troubled by becoming conscious that she was in the railway carriage alone with a gentleman; but he immediately scouted the idea that he with his grey hair and spectacles could cause such uneasiness to anyone. Besides, she must know that the train stopped every few minutes, and she could get out if she chose at the next station, which they were now already approaching.

As the train came to a standstill at the platform, the young lady looked out, and again she started violently, this time in more evident distress, clutching the arms of the compartment and staring towards the "Way Out" of the little station. But she made no attempt to leave the carriage, and it was evident to Dr. Raymond that whatever it might be that troubled her, it had no relation to himself. He was more than ever interested, but absolutely at a loss to imagine the cause.

The girl's scared and uneasy manner between the stations continued, and became more marked, and it was clear that whatever the mysterious cause of her alarm might be, she now expected its recurrence at the next station, although at first it had come as a surprise. Two more stations were reached, and at each the same thing took place.

Doctor Raymond at last decided that it was his duty as a gentleman, and especially as a physician, to try if he could be of use to this poor girl. He accordingly leaned over towards her and said kindly:

"My dear young lady, you must forgive the liberty I take in speaking to you, but I am old enough to be your father, and I am a doctor as well. I have observed that something is troubling you; something is on your mind. Will you tell me what it is? Perhaps I could give you some help."

The girl looked around nastily and said in a hurried frightened manner:

"Oh, thank you, sir, you are very kind. No, it's all right, there's nothing the matter with me, thank you."

He laid his large fat hand in a fatherly way on her dainty gloved fingers, and looked straight into her face as he answered:

"You have, of course, a perfect right to refuse to answer me; but you can't deceive me as to the fact. It is not true that nothing is the matter. You have some trouble on your mind—some serious trouble. What is it?"

He spoke with slow deliberation, and the last words were more those of command than persuasion.

The poor girl burst into tears, and the doctor feared she was going to have an hysterical attack. For now the train was again slowing up to the platform, and she caught him by the arm and pointing out of the window cried:

"Look, look! There he is! There he is!"

But she was sobbing so much and was so excited that no explanation could be got out of her before the train again started. The doctor had seen nothing to account for her excitement.

Presently, however, he succeeded in calming her, and his kind fatherly manner soon conquered her shyness and completely won her confidence.

"Oh, sir, how kind you are! thank you

so much," she said. "Yes, I should like to tell you about it now, if I may. I am engaged to be married, and I am now on my way down to Slingsby to stay with Malcolm's people. It is Malcolm Dundas I am going to be married to; perhaps you know his father, Sir Reginald Dundas of Slingsby Court?"

The doctor shook his head, and she continued:

"Well, as I say, I am going down there now. I heard from Malcolm this morning. He was perfectly well when he wrote yesterday, and he said he would meet me at Slingsby station at 1.30 to day, when this train arrives there. At the first station we stopped at I saw him on the platform, standing near the door of the booking-office, and beckoning to me to come to him. Just for a moment I thought it was really he, and I would have got out of the train only it started again so quickly. And yet he looked strange; somehow, not quite as he ordinarily looks, and his face was so sad and anxious; almost unearthly. He certainly did not get into the train, and yet I saw him again at the next station, and again at every place where we have stopped. And he always beckons to me with his hand to follow him and then goes out of the station. At the last place he looked as though he were terror-struck or in despair, I can't quite say which. Oh, sir, you are a doctor and can tell me whether there are such things as astral bodies, as some people say. I am sure it was Malcolm Dundas' spirit I saw. He must be dead. Oh, what shall I do? What shall I do?" And the tears rushed into her eyes again at the thought that some disaster had occurred to the man she loved, or some terrible mystery hung around him.

Doctor Raymond, whose keen sense of humor never forsook him even in the most searching crises of life, repressed with difficulty a smile at the girl's idea that his knowledge of anatomy would inform him as to astral bodies. But the situation demanded seriousness.

The young lady's words confirmed the notion he had already formed as to her nervous constitution, and he was persuaded that the excitement of her approaching marriage, and her eager expectation of meeting her lover had worked upon her nerves and produced an hallucination. He thought it not unlikely, moreover, from what she had said, that she had been indulging in a class of reading which had strengthened a natural tendency in that direction.

The train was again stopping, and he resolved at once what to do.

"I think, my dear young lady, that your anxiety to see Mr. Dundas has made you imagine that you saw him. If anything had happened to him, you would be sure to have had a telegram. Now, don't allow yourself to be alarmed, and I'll tell what we will do. At the next station, look out again, and if you think you see him, point him out to me; and we'll get out of the train together and go straight to him, and you'll see there is nothing really there, and so satisfy yourself that it is simply your imagination."

"There he is! there he is!" cried the girl as the train at that moment shot alongside the platform at Otterby. "Don't you see him at the station door in light clothes and straw hat with a blue ribbon? Look how he beckons me to follow him."

In an instant the doctor was out of the carriage and walking rapidly down the platform with his beautiful companion clutching his arm.

"I don't see any gentleman there," he said.

"Oh! yes, yes," cried the girl, "be quick; there he is, just going out of the station; quick! quick!" They reached the door and followed the phantom out past the booking office to the steps into the road. "There—he's gone!" said the girl. "But we were quite close to him; surely you must have seen him?"

"No, I saw nothing," the doctor answered, "so you see it was all your imagination. How could anything real vanish like that in broad daylight? Come along back to the train. This is my destination, but I'll go on with you to Slingsby. It's the next station, and you'll find Mr. Dundas there all right, you'll see."

What was their consternation to find that the train had already started and was moving so rapidly that it would have been madness to attempt to enter it. And now the girl was in a terrible state of mind. Added to her fears was the anxiety, not altogether consistent with them, as to what her lover would think, if he were at the next station in the flesh, and the train arrived without her.

"Never mind," said the doctor reassuringly, "it is unfortunate no doubt, but you can send him a telegram, and get a reply in a few minutes. The next train goes in about an hour; I'll look after you till then. We can't telegraph from this station, so come along to the post office in the village; it's only ten minutes' walk."

* * * * * *

Outside Slingsby station a smart dog-cart was standing with a liveried groom at the cob's head. Malcolm Dundas, who had thought of nothing for days but the coming of his betrothed to Slingsby, was ten minutes too soon for the train, and paced the platform impatiently with a cigar in his mouth.

At last the station clock pointed to 1.30, and he looked anxiously down the line to catch the first sight of the coming train. Surely the train which carried his sweetheart could not be late? Five-and-twenty, twenty, a quarter to two, and still no train.

"Porter," shouted Dundas, angrily, as if that innocent official were maliciously delaying the train; "what the deuce is keeping the train?"

"Don't know, sir, I'm sure. She was up to time at the Junction, sir; should be here by now."

At that instant a man was seen running along the line, and a few moments later he reached the platform. He was so breathless he could hardly pant out his message.

"Block the line—train smashed up the line there; nobody knows how many killed; fearful smash."

Poor Dundas! He was stunned. He could not speak. He could not take it in. Oh, what might not those words mean for him? He dared not hope. She was probably killed; perhaps horribly mutilated—a cripple for life; perhaps at that very moment lying in agony, crushed beneath the wrecked railway carriages a mile or so away. He had not the courage to run up the line to the scene of the accident. He was stupified.

"Telegram for you, sir."

Dundas was roused by the porter's words, and tearing open the red envelope with trembling fingers, he read: "Malcolm Dundas, Slingsby station. Very sorry missed train at Otterby. Proceed by next. Wire whether you can wait.

Maud.

Otterby Station.

It soon transpired that no one was killed in the accident, though several were more or less seriously injured. One compartment, that next the engine, was crushed to pulp; but, as the newspapers said, it was "fortunately unoccupied." Several years have passed since the Slingsby accident. You understand, now, why among the numerous friends of Malcolm Dundas and his charming wife, none is more intimate than Doctor Raymond.

THE MECCAN PILGRIMAGE.

WHAT is the Meccan pilgrimage? Ages before Mohammed, people flocked annually to Mecca to worship at the Kaabe, and to adore the sacred Black Stone. The Arabian prophet saw that this custom was too firmly grounded to be upset, and he grafted it on to his "Ism," so that the pilgrims who have gone to Mecca for the last twelve hundred years, and those who go now, have been, and are Mohammedans. Mohammed forbade the use of alcohol and swine's flesh. He enjoyed fasting, praying five times per day, frequent ablutions, and made of pilgrimage a religious duty.

Every Moslem who is in health and circumstances which will permit him to perform the journey, is under compulsion to visit Mecca once, at least, in his lifetime. Having performed it; he is a Hadji, a pious person, and is considered safe for paradise.

Very extended efforts and arrangements are made over a very large part of the earth's surface every year to carry out the pilgrimage. The conveyance of pilgrims to and from the sacred places, together with providing for their sustentation while there is a considerable branch of commerce, in which great numbers of ships are engaged, and much capital invested.

Of late years the number of pilgrims has vastly increased, owing to the facilities afforded by owners of steamers, by which passengers are conveyed for one-tenth of what it formerly cost to travel by camel-caravan and sailing-craft.

At the time Burckhardt was in Mecca (1813 1814) the number visiting the shrines was under ten thousand per annum, but it is probable that the war then being waged by the Turks against the Wahabis lessened the number. In 1874 Mr. Wilfrid Scawen Blunt stated the number at under one hundred thousand, whilst in 1876 it had risen to between three hundred thousand and four hundred thousand.

Pilgrims travel from all parts of the Moslem world, from Morocco in the west, from China in the east, from all parts of the Malay Archipelago, and from India. Great numbers go from Egypt, and also from the African coast of the Red Sea (that is, from Nubia, the Soudan, etc.). Persia sends a large contingent by steamer down the Persian Gulf, as well as by camel-caravans right across Arabia. From Khiva and far-distant Bokhara men travel painfully across the Asiatic deserts, taking a whole year to perform the double journey.

From many parts of the vast territory of Arabia itself the same process goes on, whilst from Turkey a camel-caravan sets forth, passing through Asia Minor to Damascus, at which place it rests for a fortnight, and then, being joined by other caravans, it starts on its long journey to Mecca, crossing the great Syrian desert, and taking some six weeks on the way.

This gigantic caravan consisted in 1881 of no less than 15,000 camels. Travelling takes place mostly during the night, it being cooler for the Pilgrims, and besides that, the camels feed better in daylight. Every fifth day a halt for a complete twenty-four hours is made, in order to rest the camels, and to prevent serious results to them from the chafing of the saddles and heavy burdens which they carry.

Even with this care many of them knock up, and are abandoned. Many Pilgrims are taken ill on the way, and some die. This Damascus caravan must be a marvellous sight, with its fifteen thousand camels, moving along in strings miles in length; and terribly fatiguing work the travelling must be, with the heat, the dust, the offensive smells, the trying motion of the 'ships of the desert,' and the scarce and bad water; all these must go a long way toward upsetting even the strongest of men, more especially as the strain lasts for so long a time.

Sir Richard Burton, a man in the prime of life, joined this caravan at Medina in 1853, and went on with it to Mecca, taking eleven days on the journey, but he found the strain quite as much as he could stand. Until a few years ago a similar caravan traveled from Morocco, right along the northern coast of Africa, through Algeria, Tunis, and Tripoli, to Egypt, and there joined the Cairo caravan, the whole gigantic affair then going on via Suez, striking across the northern part of the Sinaitic peninsula, and down through the desert to Medina, and on to Mecca.

The Morocco and North African Pilgrims now voyage per steamer through the Suez canal to Jeddah, and for the last year or two the Egyptian Pilgrims have gone from Suez by steamer to the same port.

It goes without saying that the crowding at Jeddah and the sacred places is necessarily excessive. Epidemics are frequent, and the mortality fearful. It has been found impossible to enforce sanitary regulations, or to ensure a sufficient supply of good water for the extraordinary demand.

The Sanitary Commissions which have been appointed have failed to do much, if any good. They have found it impossible to cope with the enormous difficulties which beset them, or with the ignorance and prejudices of half-crazy fanatics, who are careless as to whether they live or die.

Those who die are buried—after a fashion—that is to say, very carelessly, with the result that the air is rendered noisome, and the water supply is polluted. The proceedings in this regard is awful. The number of Pilgrims who die in their holy land varies of course. Sometimes thousands land who never re embark. In 1865 there were landed at the port of Yambo (for Medina) some eight thousand odd, of whom only about five thousand were reshipped.

Painful as all this is to contemplate, there seems no prospect of a change for the better: crowds of fanatics cannot be controlled by reason. But so long as nothing can be done, a terrible danger exists for every country to which Pilgrims return, and indeed for others also.

Cholera in Egypt, Asia Minor, or Turkey is a danger for all Europe and America, and of this fact the governments of Europe and the medical faculty are only too well aware.

To Lessen Noise in Workshops.—Place a rubber cushion under the legs of the machine or workbench (if practicable). The remedy will be found cheap and efficacious.

At Home and Abroad.

An experiment will be made in Vermont this year with 5000 sea trout eggs, which came from Scotland. The attempt to hatch the eggs of this fish has never before been made in the United States. An effort will be made by a New York fish culturist, and the small fish will be placed in the pure water of an inland lake near Rutland, where they can be closely watched.

Stamp collectors are a source of considerable revenue to many countries. New Zealand recently issued a letter card with scenic designs, and so great was the demand from collectors that the supply was soon exhausted. The authorities then changed the color of the card, and the demand for the different color was almost as great as it had been for the original series. In seven months nearly 60,000 cards were bought by the hobbyists, bringing the colony a clear profit of considerable over £10,000.

An old Hampshire, England, peasant farmer came to town to buy a hat, and was requested to look in the glass to see if the hat suited his taste. The customer stood before the glass as though fascinated by his reflected image. Presently he slowly inquired: "Well—is—that—me?" "Of course it is, guv'nor," was the shopman's reply. "Why, don't you know yourself?" "I be 60 years old," said the ancient, after another pause, "and I dunno as ever I see my face afore!" And when, his purchase completed, he turned to depart, he walked up to the looking glass again, saying: "I'll just take one more look at mesel', for I dunno as ever I shall ha' the chance again."

Railroad building in this country seems to have reached, and passed, its highest point of activity. That is the inference from the figures for the past year as compared with previous years, and seems to be the conclusion reached by railroad experts. In 1894 only 1,769 miles of new rail roads were built, and this was commented on a year ago as being about the lowest record likely to be touched. But during last year only 1,428 miles of new roads were built. It was argued a year ago that unfavorable economic conditions had much to do with the limited railroad extension, but there seems to be a general opinion this year, based on the view of the conditions of the country over, that the extension of railroads in the future will be small as compared with the past.

The wife of a farmer living near Sergeant Bluff, Ia., was caught in a wolf trap out on the prairie recently and held captive some thirty hours. A neighbor had set several wolf traps made of steel jaws, with a heavy spring closing them when sprung, about his farm. He placed them far away from the road, where there was no apparent danger of anything but a wolf getting caught. But the woman took a short cut home one evening, saw the trap, stopped to find out just what it was, and was firmly caught by one hand. She was unable to open the jaws with the other remained fast in the trap all night and until the next evening, when a searching party found her. She was unconscious and near death from pain and exposure.

Since the death of ex Congressman Frank Lawler, of Chicago, a number of anecdotes concerning him have been told, especially in Washington, where he is well remembered. It is related of Lawler that on one occasion he gave the doorkeepers of the House strict instructions not to present any more cards to him, as he was greatly annoyed by callers, who were taking up half his time in the lobbies. Mrs. Lawler one day approached a doorkeeper who had held his position but a short time and who did not know her. She asked to see Congressman Lawler. "Sorry, madam," he said politely, "Mr. Lawler will see no one." "Oh, yes," said Mrs. Lawler, "he will see me. You just tell him his wife is out here." "That won't do," said the doorkeeper—"that racket is worked on members every day."

[illegible] Catarrh in this section of the [illegible] all other diseases put together, and until the last few years was supposed to be incurable. For a great many years doctors pronounced it a local disease, and prescribed local remedies, and by constantly failing to cure with local treatment, pronounced it incurable. Science has proven catarrh to be a constitutional disease, and therefore requires constitutional treatment. Hall's Catarrh Cure, manufactured by F. J. Cheney & Co., Toledo, Ohio, is the only constitutional cure on the market. It is taken internally in doses from 10 drops to a teaspoonful. It acts directly on the blood and mucous surfaces of the system. They offer one hundred dollars for any case it fails to cure. Send for circulars and testimonials. Address,

F. J. CHENEY & CO., Toledo, O.

Sold by Druggists, 75c.

Our Young Folks.

GRIZEL COCHRANE.

BY H. .

"CAN you spare me a while, father?"

"Yes, yes, my child; but whither go you?"

"That is my secret, father. You shall learn anon. May I leave you? I do not myself wish to go, dear; it is for your sake—to help you."

"Go, my dear one; ay, this is a sorry place!"

"I will return, dear father, and with good news, I hope!"

"Too late, I fear me," replied her father. "Argyle is already dead, and will they spare me? Had we time, perhaps Father Peters, who has the ear of the king, might be persuaded, by my golden arguments, to influence James in my behalf.

"We will have time, father; may I depart?"

"Depart in peace, my daughter! You are brave, and have some plan."

"Yes, dear father. I have a plan which I hope will succeed. It can but fail, and we are no worse off. Yet I trust to return the better."

She embraced him affectionately, and quitted the prison chamber in the old Tolbooth in Edinburgh, where her father lay.

Grisel Cochrane, daughter of Sir John Cochrane of Ochiltree, was by no means such a patient and pliable young lady as the other and more celebrated Griselda. Sir John had been engaged in Argyle's rising against the king (James II.), and now found himself under sentence of death in the Tolbooth awaiting the arrival of the warrant, then on its way from London by the mounted mail messenger. The post took several days to reach Edinburgh from London, and meantime the prisoners were permitted to see their friends and relatives.

Grisel had paid her father a visit that day, and left him in order to carry out a project that had entered her busy brain.

Sir John sighed as she quitted the room, but Grisel did not despair. She procured a stout horse, and having attired herself in men's clothing, placed a pair of loaded pistols in her belt, took her own dress also, and as the afternoon was drawing on, rode boldly out, southward, in the direction of Berwick on the Border.

Those who saw the "lad," as they believed her to be, took no notice of "him" particularly. "He" pursued "his" way unmolested, but quite ready to defend "himself" if attacked, for Grisel in disguise was still the brave young girl, daughter of Sir John Cochrane, an ancestor of the famous Dundonald.

Grisel rode to Berwick and over the Border to a village some few miles beyond it, where she pulled up, after a long and distressing ride in the dark, at a small country inn little frequented, apparently, but evidently known to Grisel Cochrane.

Here she dismounted; as she did so very stiffly and wearily, an old woman came out with a lantern in her hand.

"Who's this?" she cried. "Young man, ye'll be waitin'—why, certie, it's Miss Grisel herself!"

"Yes, nurse, it is I! Let me in. Is all quiet?"

"Quiet as a mouse in cheese, Miss Grisel! But what brings ye here? Sir John—is he dead? And yerself?"

"Put up my horse, kind nurse, and at supper I will tell you. I am nearly beaten by fatigue."

She entered the cottage and rested while the old woman, keeping the secret from the helps, put up the horse.

But after supper Grisel and her old nurse talked confidentially, and the young lady learnt from her that the London post had not yet passed on its way north.

"He'll be here to-morrow, no doubt," she said, "or the next day, may be. He'll likely be at Belford to-morrow early in the morning."

"What time?" asked Grisel anxiously.

"About six o'clock, I should say. Then he rests and comes up here by mid-day."

"Where does he rest at Belford, nurse?"

"Indeed, then, ye're mighty anxious to meet him," said the old woman. He stays at the old inn in the village there, as ye come to it. But what's yer will with him?"

"There's a secret," whispered Grisel, nodding at her.

"Well, he's a big, ugly fellow. Ye cannot be for robbin' him—he's armed, and a tough-like customer to deal with! Besides you're a girl! What's your plan?"

"My father's release. I am disguised, you see. I will tell you to-morrow if I succeed. Good-night, nurse, and mind you call me early. Keep my valise till I return."

Nurse was watchful, and at an early hour aroused Grisel, who saddled her brave horse and rode away to Belford after a hasty meal. Belford now has a railway station. It is about fifteen miles from Berwick, and there Grisel Cochrane arrived about six o'clock in the morning.

She had not much difficulty in finding the inn at which the post carrier stayed. So she rode up boldly, dismounted, stabled her horse, as there was no one to do it for her, and then walked into the house, where she found a woman seated in the kitchen.

"Hush!" cried the hostess, "he's asleep!" She pointed to a kind of cupboard at the farther end of the great kitchen, where upon a bed, the shutter-flaps closed, slept the man who had been riding many hours with the despatches and mails.

Grisel sat down and looked about her in silence. Then she asked in a whisper who the person was who was sleeping. This, she said, so as to be certain of the man.

"The post," was the reply. "There's his coat and his pistols, you see."

Grisel saw them, but she did not see the mail bags anywhere. She could not search the house. How could she find the bags? for she wanted them—her object being to open them and to extract the warrant for her father's execution. If she could do this the execution must be delayed, and meantime perhaps Father Peters would interfere. A bold plan, but one very unlikely to succeed. What could she do? The old woman remained on guard.

Grisel had some food, but she did not drink ale. The old woman grumbled, and placed a jug of water on the table. The girl explained that she could not drink ale, but if the hostess (who was the only person visible) would draw some fresh water, Grisel would be satisfied.

"I will pay you the price of the ale for a draught of fresh cold water," she said; "this is flat and stale. Draw me some, sparkling and clear, good hostess."

The woman, smiling at the pert and pretty youth, as she thought him, and appeased by the promise of payment for the water, went off to fetch it from the yard. No sooner was her back turned than Grisel opened the doors of the bed cupboard and saw the man, a heavy fellow, fast asleep with the mail bags under his head!

Here was a disappointment. She could not possibly open them, and she could never hope to possess the warrant. As she turned away, she caught sight of the pistols and just managed to withdraw the charges from them as the old woman was coming back. Grisel did not know what to do even then, but she was thinking hard.

At length she could find no excuse to stay longer. It was eight o'clock, and the man was asleep still. Grisel had made up her mind. She paid her bill liberally, asked a few questions about the postman, and then rode away, taking a round which brought her into Belford again, just as the mail carrier was trotting away with his bags.

The girl quickly came up with him, and entered into conversation as they rode northwards together towards Berwick.

The postman was agreeable, and Grisel chatted, asking questions, and trying to find some means to get the papers.

"There are many important letters in your bags, I warrant," she remarked.

"Indeed, yes! Warrants truly, for traitors to the king, belike!"

"I should like to see them," said Grisel.

"There's many a one who will be sorry to see them, young sir."

"But I want to see them," cried Grisel. "I must look into the bags. I do not want to steal the letters!"

"You want to see them! Then want will be your master, young jackanapes! A fine thing! You're a bold lad to talk thus; and such nonsense, too!"

"I am in earnest," replied Grisel. "Listen. I must have those mails for an hour. Give them to me, and in that time come back, and you will find the bags in yonder wood."

The mail carrier laughed. "Why, you're a young highwayman, and too youthful to hang. Keep your childish jokes for others, lad. There's no trifling with me."

"I'm not trifling," replied Grisel. "Those bags I must and will have! So hand them over!"

She seized the bridle of the postman's horse, and stopped him.

"Oh, if it's earnest, here's my answer. I'd be sorry to shoot you, my pretty lad, but that I certainly will do if you arrest me. Let go my bridle," he said, drawing a pistol.

"Not till I have the bags," replied Grisel firmly, though she was full of fear. Suppose the pistols had been reloaded!

The postman raised his pistol, and pulled the trigger. The flint snapped, but no explosion followed. He cast the useless weapon from him, and snapped the other with a like result, as Grisel held her pistol to his cheek, and demanded the bags.

The man leaped down in a second, and sought to attack her from behind, but Grisel at once rode on with both horses and bags, so the postman was outwitted.

"Go back," cried Grisel. "Return again in two hours. In yonder wood you will find your mails and your steed. Retire, or I shall shoot."

It was a lonely road; the man saw there was no help for it, and did as Grisel bade him, feeling very crestfallen and angry, but he could not help himself. He returned in the direction of Belford while Grisel rode into the wood, opened the mail-bags, and quickly found the official papers, which were easily recognised, and her father's death-warrant.

She tore up all the warrants, of which there were several, and then refastened the bags, placed them on the saddle again, and tethered the horse to a tree.

The intrepid girl then rode into Berwick, and halted at her nurse's cottage. There she burnt the fragments of the death-warrants, dressed once again in her female garments, rode back all the way to Edinburgh unrecognised, and next day again visited Sir John, and told him all.

* * * * * *

The delay in the execution succeeded. The priest was bribed with five thousand pounds, and the new warrant was not issued. Sir John was released, and lived for some years after.

His brave daughter married a gentleman named Ker, but not until years later was the young "highwayman" who robbed the mails and so saved her father's life, identified with Mistress Grisel Ker, the youthful daughter of Sir John Cochrane of Ochiltree.

And the postman found his letter-bags after all.

GIPSY SUPERSTITIONS.—If a gipsy meets a woman upon entering a town, he looks upon it as a piece of good luck and a sign that he will collect plenty of alms. If, on the contrary, he encounters a man, he will get nothing, and will probably meet with misfortune besides.

No gipsy girl would listen to a nightingale singing when in company with her lover; if she did, it would denote a separation.

To see a wolf both at the same time is the greatest luck that can befall a gipsy pair.

Birds scream, as a rule, to bring misfortune.

If a cock crows when a marriage procession is passing, it denotes that the couple will always be quarrelling.

If geese or ducks fly across the path, the husband will be ground under the heel of his wife and her female relatives.

A flock of sparrows is a sign that the lover of the bride and the bridegroom will soon vanish.

Ravens or crows at a wedding denote approaching poverty.

If the birds fly to the right, the wife will soon tire of the union; if to the left, the husband will tire of the wife.

A flock of sheep brings luck; a herd of goats, misfortune.

A dog, a donkey, a cow are all signs of good fortune.

Doves or swallows crossing the path of a young pair are a sign of great riches.

If a gipsy girl wishes to know how soon she will marry, she whispers in the ear of the first donkey she meets, "Shall I soon have a husband?"

If the donkey moves its ears, the girl knows that she will marry almost immediately. If, on the contrary, the animal shakes its head, it will be some time before she gets a husband.

We talk of forgetting. As a matter of fact we never forget anything. An impression made upon the mind remains there for ever. The romance is gone that the young man adored, the illusion has perished that deluded the maiden, but the impression in each case remained, and will remain beyond any effacing at Leary. Open a long-locked drawer and run your eyes over a letter which you have not read for years, and see how readily the voices of the dead and songs of other years come back to you. In many other ways the impressions of the past are easily reproduced.

THE WORLD'S HAPPENINGS.

Brazil grows half the coffee crop of the world.

The major general of the army gets a salary of $7500

London has 40 restaurants in which only vegetable food is served.

An eye the upper lid of which passes horizontally across the pupil indicates mental ability.

The name of the stormy petrel is derived from St. Peter, because the birds appear to walk on the water

Edison prophecies that in ten years horseless carriages will be the rule, and horse-propelled vehicles the exception

The Russian soldier is more heavily burdened than any other. A foot soldier in the army of the Czar carries over 60 pounds.

In Egypt the natives believe that crocodiles cry and moan like men in distress, in order to attract and make a prey of the unwary.

There is a shellfish in the Mediterranean which produces a good quality of silk. Fabrics have been manufactured from it, but only as curiosities.

Frau Emilie Kempin, Doctor of Laws, is the first woman lawyer in Berlin. She has opened her office in the fashionable street of Unter den Linden.

A Lewiston man who picked up a gold ring on the street the other day, took it home and found, by singular coincidence, that it belonged to his wife.

A Hoosier cow devoured a rubber coat in an effort to make its milk water-proof. It is needless to surmise that the animal was the property of a dairyman.

The courts of Missouri decide that a teacher has control over a child from the time it leaves a parent to the time of its returning, including the time to and from school.

The finest shaving-brushes are manufactured from badgers' hair, and "camel's-hair" brushes are turned out in great quantities from squirrels' tails and from the hair that grows inside the ears of oxen.

More than 100,000 pairs of boots will be saved by the changes in the British army regulations, by which the soldiers may wear their shoes until they are used up, instead of having a new pair issued at stated intervals.

A flock of 2300 sheep at Churchill, Nev., were stampeded one day last week. In some way two columns of the frightened animals came together, and 300 sheep were smothered, their bodies having been piled up to a height of six feet.

A blue bottle-nosed whale, measuring 20 feet in length, was discovered off Hartlepool, England, recently. The crew of the trawler Shanklin drove the whale in between the piers, and there secured it, eventually bringing it to the fish quay.

At Chamberlain, S. D., there is an artesian well which sends up 650 gallons of water a minute. And there are other wells in the neighborhood which bring the total flow to some 20,000,000 gallons daily. The water is used for supplying electric light and power and for irrigation.

Some idea of the immense number of rabbits in Australia may be gathered from the fact that a man in the northern territory recently came across a "mob" of them about four miles wide, and as close as they could run together. Some parts of the country are so honeycombed with furrows that it is hardly safe to ride or drive.

France is one of the best paved countries in the world. The first Napoleon instituted and carried out a road system which gave France the roads which are lasting monuments to the Napoleonic foresight and shrewdness. These roads, always passable and reaching all the centres of population, are competitors of the railways.

An estate that was worth $20,000 when it got into the law courts 25 years ago, was settled last week in Los Angeles, Cal. The estate was left by Encarnacion Bueliza, in 1870. There was nobody to claim the 42 cents that remained when the public administrator offered it in the Superior Court last week, and the judge made an order directing that it be paid into the county treasury.

Dealers in bicycles are authority for the statement that the business aspect of the bicycle trade has materially changed during the past year. Instead of the man business consisting in dealing with men's wheels, quite the contrary is true. Dealers are now doing their utmost to attract the eye of the women, and it is announced that before long there will be three wheels sold for women where one will be sold for men

A certain New York newspaper announces that Ohio is considering the adoption of a novel scheme for the execution of her criminals, by which, it is claimed, death will result in shorter time and with less suffering than by either hanging or electrocution. By this device the doomed man's head is crushed in a helmet. The mere thought of such an execution is revolting, and it is impossible to believe that such a method of inflicting the death penalty should find advocates in any civilized or even semi-civilized nation in the world.

A MEMORY SONG.

BY W. W. L.

A memory song is floating
Around my heart to-night
And all my soul with gladness,
Thrills with a sweet delight.

The shadows all have vanished,
That lingered by my side;
Love wreathes my life in beauty,
As to my arms you glide.

LEFT-HANDEDNESS.

In all communities left-handed individuals seem to occur, in somewhat varying proportions. One of the prevailing ideas about right-handedness is that it is merely a matter of training, and that left-handed individuals have become so either from want of care on the part of nurses and parents, or from imitation of some other person.

In many children, the preference for one hand is shown from a very early age, before the child has learned to handle anything but the very simple toys, and therefore before training can have caused a preference at all. More than this, the experience of left-handed persons is on record in whom the peculiarity has been early noticed and combated, but without the slightest effect.

In the case of one child, both whose parents were left handed, we are told: "His mother, accordingly, watched his early manifestations of the same tendency, and employed every available means to counteract it. His left hand was bound up or tied behind him; and this was persevered in until it was feared that the left arm had been permanently injured. Yet all proved vain. The boy resumed the use of the left hand as soon as the restraint was removed."

It must not be supposed that all persons, whether right or left handed, have so strong an instinctive preference for one hand as this.

The lower limbs are much less closely controlled by the will than the upper; in walking and running, which are by far their most frequent and important uses, their movements are to a very large extent instinctive and automatic, and are, moreover, much more symmetrical than the movements of the upper limbs. Nevertheless, one foot is generally used in preference to the other in such movements as digging (hence sometimes called the spade foot), in hopping, in making a leap, etc. But there is a much less uniform preference for one side than in the case of the hand; and it by no means follows that a man is either right or left footed because he is right-handed.

It is well known that, though our external configuration is so nearly symmetrical, the arrangement of the internal organs is very different. The heart lies obliquely in the chest, and more to the left side than the right; the liver, by far the heaviest of the internal organs, is on the right side; the two lungs are differently shaped; and, moreover, the blood-vessels supplying the two sides, especially in the upper regions of the body, are differently disposed. It is natural that these irregularities of arrangement should have been thought, in some way or other, to supply the explanation.

Much ingenuity has been expended in forming theories which connect the use of the right hand with the disposition of the viscera, and the consequent situation of the centre of gravity a little to the right of the centre of the body. But there is a very simple method of putting not merely the theories, but the fact to the proof.

Individuals are occasionally met with in whom there is transposition of the viscera—that is, in whom the heart inclines to the right side, and the liver lies on the left; in fact, the internal organs are placed as they would be in the reflection of an ordinary person in a mirror. If the unsymmetrical disposition of the internal organs is the cause of right-handedness in most people, all such individuals ought to be left-handed. Occasionally they have been found to be so; but by no means generally; the coexistence of the conditions seems to be merely a coincidence.

Similarly with regard to the arrangement of the blood-vessels supplying the brain and the upper limbs, it is not found that reversal of the usual arrangement is associated with left-handedness, as must be the case were the unsymmetrical arrangement the cause of right-handedness.

There is, however, one extremely curious and interesting instance of want of symmetry in the bodily functions, which is not merely analogous to right-handedness, but closely linked with it. The nervous machinery normally connected with speech is situated on one side of the brain only. So intimate is the relation of this subject to right-handedness that we must consider it in some detail.

It is well known that each side of the brain is connected with the movements and sensations mainly on the opposite side of the body; the right brain moves the left arm and leg, and vice versa. Now, cases are not infrequent in which, with or without "a shock," or at least some degree of obvious loss of muscular power on the right side of the body, the faculty of recalling and reproducing spoken words is totally or almost totally lost. Such loss of speech is technically called aphasia.

It was first shown some thirty-five years ago, by a French physician, that this particular symptom is associated with damage to a limited and very definite part of the brain-substance on the left side, which has since been known, in honor of its discoverer, as Broca's convolution.

When the power of speech has thus been lost, it is possible, if the mental faculties are not otherwise damaged, to acquire it again, by just such a course of training and practice as the child passes through in learning to speak at first, even where Broca's convolution has been so damaged as to be quite incapable of performing its functions.

In such a case, the portion of the brain on the right side corresponding to Broca's convolution is capable of taking up its work; but only by being educated to do so, just as the damaged portion of the brain had been originally. If after this the power of speech is lost again, by damage to the right side similar to that which had impaired the left, there is no hope of its being restored a second time.

It is thus clear that there are two organs or portions of the brain capable of controlling speech; and that under ordinary circumstances only one of them is trained to do so, the other lying fallow. All the education is given to one favored side, and all the work is done by it; but the neglected one, if called by necessity to undertake the work, can be trained to do it, and to do it, apparently, as satisfactorily as the other.

Grains of Gold.

A man who is not ashamed of himself need not be ashamed of his early condition.

The duty of criticism is neither to depreciate nor dignify by partial representations.

Scandal, like the Nile, is fed by innumerable streams; but it is extremely difficult to trace it to its source.

Courteousness and firmness may be fast friends. The respect due to others is closely allied to the respect due to self.

When you give, take to yourself no credit for generosity, unless you deny yourself something in order that you may give.

The great truth that needs to be taught to every child, impressed upon every youth, and established in every mind is that the basis of all happiness is loyalty to truth and right.

Beautiful things are suggestive of a purer and higher life, and fill us with mingled love and fear. They have a graciousness that wins us, and an excellence to which we involuntarily do reverence.

Femininities.

When love is blind, marriage is a successful oculist.

The longer and drier table linen is ironed the better it looks.

The girl who becomes engaged this year is an object of suspicion.

The greater your secret is the more liable your confidant is to tell it.

In Massachusetts it is shown by statistics that women are longer-lived than men.

Sending prettily worked, comfortable slippers to a single gentleman is a strong hint.

The woman who neglects her husband's shirt front is no longer the wife of his bosom.

It is better to be laughed at for not being married, than to be unable to laugh because you are.

Miss Pullman gets $10,000 a year for naming her father's cars; so there's a great deal in a name.

Glass in oven door is a new contrivance. It enables cooks to watch the food without opening the doors.

Mrs. Banks: Have you any trouble in getting servants? Mrs. Rivers: No; I've had five in the last two weeks.

Indiana records the death of Alfred Glover, aged 76, whose mark of distinction was that he was never seen to laugh.

A fond husband boasts that his wife is so industrious that when she has nothing else to do she sits and knits her brows.

"Too much girls!" a very small boy readily replied on being asked how he had enjoyed himself at his first children's party.

"What is love!" asks a correspondent. Love, my friend, is thinking that you and the girl can be an eternal picnic to each other.

When taking the ashes out of the grate, open the window and shut the door; this will cause the dust to go up the company.

He, putting on the ring: So glad you like opal! Many girls are afraid of 'em! She, suspiciously: How do you know? He: Tried 'em.

The look on any married woman's face should convince the girls that the men are not worth the exertion necessary to catch one.

A Chicago woman has been arrested because she was found on the street praying that the heavens might open and pour down whisky.

The Empress of Russia owns an ermine mantle valued at $50,000. It was a present from her subjects living in the province of Kherson.

When do we begin to love people? When they begin to let us look into their hearts, and their hearts are found to be worth looking into.

"The church," wrote a reporter of a fashionable wedding, "was decorated with tall palms and lilies—which also formed the bride's bouquet."

"Your dress," said a husband to his fashionable wife, "will never please the men." "I don't dress to please men," was the reply, "but to worry other women."

It was a new bunco game attempted by a Belfast, Me., genius, who cut the names off a petition two or three years old and pasted them on his latest scheme before the city government.

Early widowhood appears to be the sad destiny of many members of the British royal family. The Queen herself was widowed at 42, the Empress Frederick at 68, the Princess Beatrice at 39.

It was said that Millais couldn't be elected President of the Royal Academy because he married a divorced woman. Which shows that the British matron has lost her influence upon British art.

Little Eleanor, three years old, has a new cloak with a breast-pocket in it. The other day, as she was going up to town with her mother, she exclaimed, "Oh, mamma, I have a hole in my up-stairs pocket!"

Two months ago a horse and lap robe were stolen from Jonathan Davis, of Greenville, Ga. Last week Mr. Davis was asked by his brother-in-law, in Macon, to run over and look at a fine horse he had bought. Mr. Davis went and found that it was his horse, and that the man who had sold it to his brother-in-law had thrown in the lap robe.

In Dakota queer wedding gifts are in vogue. Following is a list of presents received at a recent wedding: A bull pup, a yellow dog, a water spaniel, a meerschaum pipe and tobacco pouch, a good shotgun, a bowie knife, a rifle, three dogs, a game rooster, one fiddle, one banjo, one spotted pup, one English mastiff and a pair of silver-mounted pistols.

An Iowa woman recently got a verdict in a breach of promise suit awarding her $1 damages. In the trial it was shown that the proposal had been made after an acquaintance of only 24 hours. The plaintiff, however, claims that the jury was prejudiced, and she has filed a motion for a new trial. In these prosperous national times $1 a day is certainly an exceedingly low value to place on a woman's affections.

Masculinities.

You can't afford to lose your temper every time you have reason to.

You can always tell whether a man is married or single by giving him a baby to hold.

It is said that there are fully one hundred ex-priests in the ranks of the cab drivers of Paris.

An Ohio justice fined a little girl $10 and costs and sent her to jail five days for whispering in church.

If the old fellows were as wild when young as they claim to have been, how much better the world has grown!

A man is seldom so absent-minded that he forgets who the people are that owe him small sums of money.

In Paris it is required that every vehicle traversing its streets at night, if only a wheelbarrow, shall carry a lantern.

Every woman regards the confession of a young man that he is striving to be a better man as equivalent to a proposal.

The letters in the various alphabets of the world vary from twelve to 32 in number. The Sandwich Islanders' alphabet has twelve, the Tartarian 202.

General Horace Porter's latest motto is that the first half of a man's life is spent in getting his name into the papers, and the last half in a struggle to keep it out.

An ill-natured man being seen to blush, it was asked what the cause was. "Oh," said a witty lady, "the cross old creature happened to smile, and he feels ashamed of it."

Count Magro, the dwarf husband of Mrs. Tom Thumb, has ordered a bicycle. His height is 30 inches, and the bicycle, which is to be made to order, will weigh less than 10 pounds.

Some men are arrogant because of their ancestors, and many another man shows the same feeling through the belief that his descendants will trace their ancestry back to him with pride.

"Mr. Insite, give the class your idea of optimist and pessimist." "Yes, sir. An optimist is a man who is happy when he's miserable, and a pessimist is a man who is miserable when he's happy."

Mark Twain is a most inveterate billiard player. He will drop any amusement or occupation to indulge in his favorite game. It is said that he will play all night and all the next day if he can find an opponent.

Columbia, Ky., has a practically uneducated Baptist preacher who can recite every chapter in the Bible. It is said that one can call for any chapter, and this preacher will recite it in its entirety with the greatest ease.

A lawyer of Biddeford, Me., is afflicted with a peculiar mania for collecting lamps of all sorts. His craze cost him a great deal of money, and he declares that he is aware of the folly of it, but is entirely unable to resist it.

A remarkable feat in moving was successfully accomplished in Chicago recently when a large stone church, with a massive square tower, was jacked up from its foundation and moved a distance of fifty feet to another lot.

A monument to the second wife of Lawrence Washington has recently been discovered in a church in Kent, England, which proves that Washington was descended from the founder of Baliol College, at Oxford, and the brother of John Baliol, King of Scotland.

Mrs. Blaine has a collection of twenty presentation gavels received by the late James G. Blaine while Speaker of the House. Mrs. Randall has fourteen. Speaker Reed has quite a large collection of gavels received during his former term, and has had half a dozen given to him since the present session began.

Suitor: Respected sir, you must not be surprised at my calling upon you in evening dress. The reason is a serious one. I am in love with your daughter, and have come to apply for her hand. Stern parent, a millionaire: Bless me, I feel highly honored; but I have three daughters, which of them is it you are in love with? Suitor: Whichever you please.

All Hail Matrimony!—It is: Hot cakes, comfortable slippers, smoking coffee, kind words, buttons, redeemed stockings, bootjacks, happiness, etc. Single blessedness is: Sheet-iron quilts, blue noses, frosty rooms, ice in the pitcher, unregenerated linen, headless socks, coffee sweetened with icicles, gutta percha biscuits, flabby steak, dull razors, corns, coughs, and colics, rhubarb, misery, etc.

He: At last we are alone, and I have an opportunity to speak. I have been seeking this moment for days and days, for I have something to say to you. She: Go on, Mr. Harkins. He: I will. Miss Jones, you perhaps have not noticed that at times I have been constrained, uneasy, even awkward in your presence—that I have had something on my mind that I felt I must say to you? She, softly: Yes. He: That constraint, that awkwardness, Miss Jones, was due to—due to—— She: Go on, Mr. Harkins. He: Was due to the fact that I feared you were not aware that I am engaged to your mother.

Latest Fashion Phases.

The new ecru embroideries shown for trimming batiste gowns are very elaborate in design and much more beautiful than any we have had before. They come in various widths of insertion and edging to match, and in very open patterns, which can be applied like lace.

The new lawns and dimities are exceedingly pretty, with flowered stripes in soft, faded colors, and plain stripes of color on a white ground. Swiss muslins, too, are quite new in design, with lines of color and Dresden bouquets scattered all over them in addition to the usual white dots.

Yellow in all the shades from a delicate tint to the bright screaming red-yellow similar to the old fashioned flame color, is first in the list of fashionable colors for the coming season. But as no special shade ever rules the day in fashion, so there are no end of new greens mixed with blue, lovely rose tints, marine and Neapolitan blues and metallic gray, which make a pretty background for flowered and Persian designs. All the violet shades and pretty dark blue, with peacock or plum tints, will be worn. In fact, the scheme of color is the same as ever, with endless variations in shading.

A new style of applique trimming is made of several thicknesses of French crepe arranged in handsome patterns on light-colored silk. Small diamonds are introduced into some of the new embroideries with fine effect. Picotte lace studded with turquoise and diamonds is used for the yoke of white and colored chiffon waists.

The shirt waist of 1896 certainly justifies its name more than any which have appeared before, since it has a wide standing collar and cuffs of white linen buttoned on like those on a man's shirt. Madras cloth in black and white stripes and ecru batiste with colored dots on lace stripes are very popular for these waists, and in addition there is the usual variety of colored lawn, cambric and cheviot.

New warp printed taffeta silks are more vague as to pattern and more beautiful in coloring than ever, and iridescent taffeta with Marie Antoinette designs upon it is very effective. Among other new silks are Persian brocades, glossy corded silks and Dresden silks with a shadowy over weaving which softens the colors very prettily.

Fancy buckles, clasps and buttons will retain their popularity through the spring, and fancy gold plated belts an inch wide, in great variety of filigree patterns, sometimes set with imitation jewels, are worn, and also the plain gold band so effective with dark velvet coats.

Real Valenciennes lace is in greater demand than ever, and is used for trimming jabots, ruches, collars, chemisettes and all sorts of neckwear.

French tailor made costumes are made with very short full basques elaborately braided and trimmed in front with frog buttons, and the skirts are also braided.

Spring hats are to be worn well tilted over the eyes, as has been the fashion for some time now, and the hair must have a more fluffy and uncombed appearance than ever to give the required breadth below.

The coat which bids fair to be most worn through the spring is a short loose-backed jacket hanging straight from a yoke, and one style is made with three box plaits in the back and plaited epaulets over the sleeves.

A useful and stylish gown has the skirt of soap-blue cloth made with two plaits on the hips, each plait being held in position by six Persian buttons. It is lined throughout with silk.

The full blouse of fancy check velvet, in black, blue and threads of gold color, turns back to form charming revers and collar of the blue cloth, lined with silk and ornamented with Persian buttons. Two buttons adorn either side of the front at the base of the revers. The vest of blue cloth is trimmed in the centre with black silk embroidery, while the cloth collar band and overhanging frill at the sides are garnished in the same way. The crushed belt is of plain black velvet. The full gigot sleeves of fancy velvet are finished at the hand with a pointed cloth cuff embroidered with black silk. This bodice would be very effective made of summer fabrics, with removable collar, cuffs, vest and revers of white pique and trimmed with white pearl buttons.

The blue felt hat is embellished with blue shot ribbon, which is laid in soft folds across the centre of the front, secured on either side by a fancy buckle, the ribbon then being formed into graceful loops, which are interminglied with black quills and a black aigrette.

Another gown is made of beige cloth, trimmed with white cloth elaborately embroidered with silver paillettes, sable fur and white satin ribbon. The nine-gored skirt, falling in many pretty folds to the foot, is finished without adornment.

The snugly fitted bodice, both at the back and front, has a square yoke of the embroidered cloth, bordered with fur. A box plait of beige cloth ornaments the centre of the front from the yoke to the belt, enriched on either side by a band of embroidered white cloth. The belt of white satin ribbon fastens at the left side of the front under a large rosette bow of the same. The embroidered collar band is headed by a full frill of white lace. The leg-of-mutton sleeve is trimmed with a gauntlet cuff of white cloth, garnished at the edge with a narrow embroidery.

The brown velvet toque is enriched at the right side by a large bow of beige-colored ribbon. The back part is slightly caught up and trimmed with a bow of white lace.

A very smart gown of heliotrope cloth is trimmed with Paisley velvet, mink tail, white satin and white lace. The full flaring skirt is perfectly plain.

The fitted bodice has a box plait of the cloth in the front, and an over-vest of broche Paisley velvet, which is cut in quite a new fashion, with an open square at the neck, and connected across the bust by a band of the broche, and is entirely edged with mink tail. The open square is filled in at the throat with white satin, covered with white lace. The belt is black satin. The white satin collar band has a turn-over collar of Paisley velvet. The large sleeve is quite novel and new, having two slashings on the outside of each puff, through which appears some heliotrope velvet. Each slashing is embellished by a long scallop of the Paisley velvet, the same stylish material reappearing at the cuffs, thus completing a very chic afternoon gown, which is quite essential at this season of the year.

Another attractive gown is made of dark green velvet. The skirt is very full, but quite plain.

The perfectly fitting bodice has a seamless back, while the fronts are fitted by a single plait, which is arranged as a fold on either side and opens to display a full vest of white satin. A band of sable fur starts from the shoulders, close to the arm-hole, descends to the bust at the edge of the vest, then ascends at an angle for three inches, from whence it again descends in a straight line to the belt. Three cut steel buttons adorn the edge of the vest between the bust and belt. The velvet collar has the upper edge encircled with sable fur. The belt is of gold ribbons. The sleeve is cut leg-of-mutton shape, finished with a bang of fur.

A toque to match, with a plume of black feathers, looks exceeding well with this swell gown.

Odds and Ends.

ON A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS.

Quick Loaf Cake.—Five cups of flour, one and one-half cups of butter, four eggs, beaten separately; two and one-half cups of sugar, one and one half cups of milk, one-half wineglass of rum, warmed in a little of the milk, scant one-half teaspoonful of soda, dissolved in a little of the milk, three quarters of a pound of raisins; flavored with mace. Beat the whites of the eggs to a stiff froth and add alternately with the flour.

Spanish Puffs.—Two ounces of sugar, four of butter, five of flour, one gill of water, three eggs, a pinch of salt. Take water, sugar and butter and let them come to a scald. Stir in the flour with a wooden spoon till thoroughly mixed. Then set away to cool. When cool, beat in one egg at a time till thoroughly mixed. Butter slightly a sheet of paper and drop on with a spoon about six puffs, and lower on the paper into boiling fat. This same mixture can be put into the oven and baked for cream cakes.

Oyster Cutlets.—Oyster cutlets are excellent as a course for a luncheon. To make them, chop very fine a half pint of oysters. Soak two tablespoonfuls of cracker crumbs in the oyster liquor and mix with the prepared oysters and a cupful of the white meat of chicken, chopped fine. Place in a saucepan over the fire a tablespoonful of sugar, and when it is melted stir into a tablespoonful of flour. Add the oysters and chicken mixture and stir a few moments. Add two eggs, well beaten. Mix thoroughly and take from the fire. Turn on a platter to cool. When the mixture has become cold butter a cutlet mould and cover with bread crumbs. Pack with the cold mixture and turn out on a dish sprinkled with crumbs. When all the material has been molded, dip the cutlets into beaten egg and then in crumbs. Cook in boiling fat until a nice brown. Drain on paper. Serve very hot with the following sauce: Put three tablespoonfuls butter into a saucepan. When melted add the same quantity of flour and beat together. Add gradually one pint of white stock. Season with some sprigs of parsley, a piece of mace, one small onion and a few pepper corns. Let it simmer 20 minutes, then strain and put it over the fire once more. Add half a cup of rich milk and salt to the taste.

Lemon Cheesecakes.—Take two large lemons and rub the rind with one pound of loaf sugar, so that all the yellow part is removed; place the sugar in a basin, squeeze the juice of the lemons over, then add the yolks of six eggs, and beat it all well up, and put it by in a jar for use; it will keep for years. Any flavor, such as vanilla or cinnamon, may be added if liked. When required for use, having made the paste and lined the tins, mix one tablespoonful of the mixture with a teacupful of good milk, and place a little in each tartlet.

Delicious Cake.—Three-quarters of a pound of sugar, three-quarters of a cup of milk, three quarters of a pound of flour, yolks of four eggs, whites of three, one teaspoonful of vanilla, half a teaspoonful of soda, one teaspoonful of cream tartar, three ounces butter melted. Place sugar in mixing bowl and stir in the yolks of the eggs, previously well beaten; add the milk and vanilla, sift in the soda, put a heaped teaspoonful of cream of tartar into the flour and sift both into the mixture; add the whites of the eggs beaten to a stiff froth, and last the melted butter. When this is poured in mix by thrusting the spoon to the bottom of the mass and bringing it up over the butter; stir it in as lightly as possible. The butter can be melted in a cup in a saucepan of boiling water. Have ready two round tin pans, well greased paper and bottoms lined with greased paper. Pour the cake into these and bake from 50 to 60 minutes. At the expiration of time hold the pan near the ear; if a blazing sound is heard it is not sufficiently baked. The oven should be hot at first, then reduced to a slow, steady heat. If the cake browns too quickly, cover the top with paper.

Frozen Plum Pudding.—Make a custard of one quart of milk and the yolk of four eggs, with a cup and a half of pulverized white sugar. Seed and cut into pieces three ounces of raisins. Add three ounces each of citron and preserved cherries, cut small. Mix with fruit three ounces of grated chocolate, pour over these ingredients enough hot water to cover all, and let them simmer together until a thick paste is formed, stirring frequently. Instead of water Malaga wine, which the old books call for, can be used if preferred. Next add the custard to the cooked fruit; also one quart of cream sweetened with five ounces of sugar flavored with vanilla and whipped up light. Put the cream into the freezer, and when it begins to harden whip up the white of four eggs to a stiff froth and stir in lightly. Scrape from the sides constantly as it freezes, which gives the true consistency of the frozen pudding —"frappe."

Peanut Candy.—Shell and skin three quarts of peanuts, put two cupfuls granulated sugar in a small shallow saucepan on the side of the range and let it melt slowly. As soon as it turns brown take from the stove and stir in peanuts. Spread this on pans to cool.

Cabbage in Cream Sauce.—Take a medium-sized fresh head of white cabbage and cut it in quarters, after moving the outer green leaves. Cut out the stem from the head and throw the cabbage into a kettle of boiling water. Let it cook for 10 minutes; then remove it with a skimmer and put it into cold water to cool. After this the unpleasant odor so noticeable in cooking cabbage disappears. When the cabbage is cold, chop it fine, season it with salt and pepper and add two large tablespoonfuls of butter mixed with an even tablespoonful of flour and a pint of milk. Let the cabbage simmer slowly for three-quarters of an hour and then serve. Such a dish of cabbage served with a piece of fresh beef, braised with vegetables till it is thoroughly tender, gives a dinner an epicure might enjoy. The meat has had all its juices carefully saved by browning it in a small portion of stock—a process quite similar to roasting. By this method all the liquor in which the meat is cooked is saved for the gravy. The farmer's pot roast is similar to the French braise and is a process in every way superior to the extravagant method of boiling meat when the best parts of the beef are soaked out in the water.

Taffy.—Two cupfuls of molasses, two cupfuls of brown sugar, three-fourths of a cupful of butter. Boil until it hardens in water; then stir in a pinch of soda. Pour thin on buttered tins to cool.

Try a pail of cold water to purify the air of the room.

Grease spots may be removed from wall paper by putting clean blotting paper over them and pressing it with a hot flatiron.

Black kid gloves are sometimes a source of annoyance on account of little white streaks at the seams. This trouble will be diminished by coloring a little salad oil with black ink, then rub this over the white places with a feather; dry quickly outside the window.

Cold storage for clothes is the latest novelty in the big downtown refrigerators in the New York dry goods district. The idea is to get rid of the moths.

The best way to set the dye of black lisle-thread hose is to put a couple of good pinches of common salt in the washing water.

Cultivate the habit of breathing through the nose and taking deep breaths. If this habit were universal there is little doubt that pulmonary affections would be decreased one-half. An English physician calls attention to the fact that deep and forced inspiration will keep the entire body in a glow in the coldest weather, no matter how thinly one may be clad.

Bake cottage pudding in gem or popover pans, thus giving to each person an individual pudding. This way not only adds to the attractiveness of this simple but popular dish, but conserves its lightness, if, as often happens, a careful hostess attempts to cut the pudding with a steel knife when not from the oven. The usual sauce accompanies the individual serving.

Corks that have been steeped in vaseline are an excellent substitute for glass stoppers. Acid in no way affects them, and chemical fumes do not cause decay in them, neither do they become fixed by a blow or long disuse, which latter fact will be appreciated by if one who often lost time and temper by a "beastly fast stopper." In short, they have all the utilities of the glass without its disadvantages.

Here is the correct way to carve a fish: Run a knife down the back, cutting through the skin. Remove the fins. Then cut into even pieces on one side. When these pieces are served remove the bones and cut the under side in the same way.

Crumbs spread over the tops of dishes should be mixed evenly with melted butter over the fire. This is a better method than having lumps of butter dotted over the crumbs after they are spread. When the sauce bubbles through the crumbs on top of a scallop dish the cooking is complete.

Immediate relief may be had in cases of neuralgia by squeezing a sponge or cloth out of water as hot as it can be borne, and applying it to the back of the neck. Acetic acid diluted is also most invigorating and refreshing, applied to the top of the head and back of the neck. For a fever-patient, this acid applied according to the directions on the bottle over the body, has been found of the greatest value, and is most refreshing. It gives tone to the nerves, and materially aids convalescence.

A Useful Poison.—The Bombay Government's analysis has been investigating the various poisons that are used in India, and in the course of his report he disposes of the old notion that pounded glass is the most deadly kind of substance you can mix with the food of any one against whom you entertain a particular grudge. "Pounded glass," he says, "is a most useful poison."

He does not, of course, mean by this that its assists digestion, or can safely be recommended as a pick-me-up after a hard day's work, but that it is "useful" in the sense of not doing very much harm to the person whose life is aimed at and leading very easily to the detection on the would-be murderer.

If it is pounded until it becomes very fine, it causes merely "slight discomfort," and can be detected in the first mouthful of the food with which it is mixed. The same may be said, it appears, of diamond dust, tiger's whiskers, chopped hair and such like. After all, two penn'orth of blackbeetle-killer is as good—or as bad—as anything, and you can get this at the nearest grocer's. Where, I wonder, would you have to go in search of tiger's whiskers or diamond dust?

Recent Book Issues.

"A Whirl Asunder" is a pretty love story, well told, by Gertrude Atherton, author of a number of popular short novels. It is beautifully printed and bound, and altogether makes a pleasant hour or two of reading. The F. A. Stokes Company, publishers. For sale by Wanamaker.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

For any one who wants to keep abreast of the best thoughts of Europe the "Eclectic Magazine" can be commended. The February number as usual is full of selected articles from the leading English magazines of the world, and each is as valuable as it is entertaining. Published at New York.

The February number of that splendid publication, "Music," is out, and like its predecessors, is filled from cover to cover with matter of the highest interest to all those having a liking for the divine art. Published at Chicago.

The February "St. Nicholas" opens with a little poem by Charles Lee, based upon a true incident in the life of Washington. Christine Terhune Herrick gives an interesting glimpse of "The Gibson Boy." Frank Welles Calkins has an exciting story of a buffalo hunt with the Indians on the Western frontier. Jingles, poems and other interesting reading make an unusually valuable number. The Century Co., New York.

Among the articles of special interest in the February "Century" are "Pope Leo XIII., and his Household," by Marion Crawford. Henry M. Stanley retells "The Story of the Development of Africa" in a fresh way with reference to current events. Capt. Alfred T. Mahan, the distinguished naval critic, contributes the first of several papers on Nelson's naval victories, dealing with "Nelson at Cape St. Vincent." These are fair samples of the many interesting articles. The illustrations are particularly notable. For range and readableness the number challenges attention. Published at New York.

A portrait of a comely maiden, printed in colors, adorns the title cover of the February number of the "Cosmopolitan Magazine." As in pictures and reading matter—the whole number forms a prodigal literary and pictorial feast. Published at Irvington, N. Y.

The January number of "Popular Science" begins a new volume—the 30th. The following with other interesting articles are among the contents: "Yellowstone's Death Gulch," "Astronomy With an Opera Glass," "Mystery of Eels," "Photography in Colors," "Hygienic Value of Color," "Harmfulness of Cough Mixtures," "Influence of Odors Upon the Voice," "A Subterranean City," "Phosphorescence," etc. Published at New York.

Trixy's Lover.

BY W. R. D.

SHE was only a fair young creature, slender and sun-browned, with hazel eyes, and hair just of that burnished tint which Raphael loved so.

He was a pale-faced youth, with haughty lips, and calm, azure eyes, in the steadfast gaze of which one read the giant pride and strong ambition that would sway the man in years to come—a handsome, forceful youth, perhaps a trifle selfish, perhaps a thought too lordly in bearing for all to like him.

He was the heir to boundless wealth, broad lands, an only child, ever fondly cherished, ever taught that the blood in his young veins was the blood of heroes and statesmen; so, if Gerald Elden was very proud, who will wonder?

And yet he found her very sweet and fair, notwithstanding the fact of her being a poor rector's daughter, her only dower that fresh, sweet face, her only pride the single parent left he, her only ambition to do any good that she found waiting to be done, and avoid all evil.

The rector of a small country district, Mr. Lane, finding his income too small, took occasionally a youth whom he prepared for college; and that is how these two met—the rector's daughter and the heir of the Eldens.

For six months the young man pursued his studies of Latin and Greek under the rector, growing bronzed and strong in the clear air of the country. Then, in the autumn, he left the rectory; but not without having wakened the young heart of Elsinore Lane, and taught it the lesson of a first, idolatrous love.

"You will be true to me, sweetheart?" he whispered, as they were parting. "I will come back for you some day. You will be sure?"

"I will be true," she faltered, her sweet face white as death. "Whenever you come you will find me waiting."

"I know it, my dearest; and you will not doubt me? You will know that, once my own master, I will hasten here to claim your promise?"

"I will know it," she said, in a low voice. "Should I think otherwise for an hour, I would die. You could not forget, Gerald—greatly as we are divided by difference of birth, you will not forget—you will love me always best?"

"Best and only!" was his answer.

And then, with clinging embraces and sincerest regret on both sides, they parted.

She heard from him regularly for a year. His long tender letters were life to her for one long year of hope; then suddenly they grew brief and infrequent, and at last came no more; and the sun of her existence shone for Elsinore Lane no longer.

It was two years after that tender parting between Gerald and Elsinore that a stroke of paralysis laid the rector helpless on his couch. Six months later, the old man died, and his daughter, then twenty years of age, was left alone in a world of which she knew so very little.

Does not Heaven temper the wind to the shorn lamb? Heaven raised a friend for the delicate young orphan in her hour of need; and the man who was appointed to fill her father's place obtained a position for her as governess.

Young as she was she had been carefully taught, and her employers were delighted with her. The little children given to her care learned to love her fondly; and but for that never dying love in her heart, that passionate yearning for a sight of her false lover's face, she might have been perfectly content with her lot.

Besides the little creatures who were taught by her, there was a fair daughter of the house—a beautiful, stately, blue-eyed girl, sweet and pure as day-dawn—and her name was Beatrice Arden.

She was betrothed, Elsinore knew, but her lover was not to claim her for a year; and while that year passed, it chanced that the governess never saw him, nor was his name spoken of in her presence; "Trixy's lover," the children always called him.

Once, when he spent a month with the Ardens, Elsinore and the little ones were away at a farmhouse among the hills, where they had been sent, because tiny May was not strong; when they returned Mrs. Arden and Beatrice had gone to stop some weeks beside a picturesque lake, and in the party which they joined, there was "Trixy's lover."

In the autumn they returned, and preparations were made for the bridal, which would take place in November.

"I am so happy!" Beatrice said once to Elsinore. "I do not think there is a happier girl in the whole world than I. You should see my prince, Miss Lane, and then you will not wonder that I have made an idol of him. He is so true and noble! I know that in his whole life he has spoken no single false word, cared for no one but me, and my heart is almost heavy with its weight of joy."

And Elsinore bent her face to hide the bitter drops that sprang to her eyes, while a prayer arose from her heart to heaven that Beatrice Arden might keep her love and faith, not lose them from life, as she had lost hers.

Then came the day of the wedding. "Trixy's lover" had come for his bride, and Beatrice, with a new solemnity on her beautiful face, a new steadfastness in her blue eyes, surveyed her white-robed loveliness in a mirror.

"Will I ever be less happy do you think?" she asked Elsinore, who was fastening the silken veil, and strewing orange blossoms along the fleeces of the bridal dress.

"Will my lover ever cease to love me—ever wish he had not made me his wife? Somehow, although my trust in him is absolute, to-night I have a presentiment of evil—a feeling as though my happiness was passing from me. Can you explain it?"

"You are nervous," smiled Elsinore. "Try to remember nothing but the fact that your lover is waiting for you—waiting to call you his wife! May Heaven avert all evil from your future, my dear child!"

"Ah, you are kind!" and the bride bent and kissed her. "But how pale you are! Are you ill, Miss Lane?"

"I have a sharp pain in my side. It is nothing; I have had it occasionally for years. Ah, they want you, and you are quite ready! Go to your lover—go to love and happiness."

And Beatrice went—to love and happiness, leaving the girl, scarcely older in her years than herself, to struggle against the sharpness of mental and physical pain—the poor orphan of the rector, who had so loved Gerald Elden that the years had not taught her forgetfulness, nor his faithlessness given her pride to crush the idolatry to death.

Then she was sent for to take the children to the church; and, still white from the pain she was enduring, with a wistful protest in her soft, dark eyes, she obeyed the summons.

For a moment the faces of the guests were confused and uncertain to her, as she led her charges through them to the place assigned.

Then the ceremony commenced, and at the first pause, when a man's "I will!" rang out clearly through the silence, a low cry left her lips, and her eyes flew open and fixed themselves upon the bridal party.

There was Beatrice, with delicate, downcast face; there the clergyman, saying the solemn words that were to bind two for a lifetime; and there, with the light glancing from the gold of his hair, and showing the calmness of lip and eye—there, linking his life to another's for all time, stood Gerald Elden.

The old love, the old memories, the vows he had spoken to her, the dream which they had dreamed, but only she remembered, crushed heavily on the heart of Elsinore; the lights about her swayed and dimmed; the haughty faces became blurred, and finally faded; she saw but one in that assemblage, and that one had said to her—

"You will not doubt me? You will know, once my own master, I will hasten here to claim your promise?"

Ah, how keen the lance was that went through her heart! how her face whitened and her pulses numbed and slackened under the pain! A low, moaning sob burst from her, but no one paid any heed; her knotted hands flew to her bosom, and were pressed there convulsively; but no one saw. Why should eyes turn to the governess in her corner, or hearts feel for her? What was she but a hireling, allowed to witness the bridal of Beatrice Arden?

Beatrice Arden no more, but Beatrice Elden, the beautiful bride, received congratulations and good wishes from all sides.

At last, with a kindly remembrance of the governess, she crossed the vestry and paused before the slight, drooping figure in the great chair.

"Why, have you no good wish for me, Miss Lane?" she asked, cheerfully. "Everybody else has said something kind; will you not?"

But Elsinore, ever ready in the past with kindly, gentle words, neither lifted her head nor answered.

"Are you ill? Is that pain troubling you still?" asked Beatrice, softly, bending to look in the drooping face, her own pitiful.

The next moment a cry of alarm sprang from her lips, so sharp and shrill that it brought Gerald instantly to her side.

"What is it, love?" he questioned, anxiously.

She pointed a shaking finger at Elsinore.

"She has fainted, or—or is dead!" she told him. "Look at her face. I am afraid, Gerald—afraid——"

But he was obeying her. He was turning the white, still face upward, and regarding its rigid young beauty with growing horror—was, perhaps, remembering many times his lips had touched the softness of that cold cheek, the tender curves of those drawn, blue lips.

It was well that other hands put him aside, and in the excitement his emotion passed unnoticed; well for him that the girl who had given her life into his hands in that hour never dreamed that he had seen the face of the dead governess.

For she was dead—she who had said to him,—

"Whenever you come, you will find me waiting!"

She would wait now among the angels—wait for the lover who had been untrue, who had loved her only for an hour of his youth!

Heart-disease, the men of science called it; some valve had closed; some tissue given way.

Gerald Elden did not listen. He only knew that as he breathed his vows there, the girl he had taught to love him had died. Was his bridal-hour a happy one?

A RACE BETWEEN GEESE AND TURKEYS.—George IV., when Prince Regent, was much given to wagers; but oftentimes he was beaten at his own game.

Once a gentleman who had frequently lost wagers with His Royal Highness determined to be revenged, and amongst other subjects introduced one evening, he casually observed that he met a drove of turkeys, and noticing how slow they traveled, said that he believed that geese would travel faster.

"Nonsense," said His Royal Highness.

"Well," said the gentleman, "I believe they will; and I am willing to wager that I drive a flock of geese one mile along the turnpike road against any one you may select to drive a number of turkeys, only allowing me to name time and place."

"Done, for a thousand pounds," was the reply; and the next day was fixed for the trial to come off. They met at a certain spot; the Prince Regent was there incog., but had a trusty friend with a flock of turkeys.

Presently the gentleman appeared with his geese; but as he had the time to name, he fixed a quarter of an hour before sundown. The time arrived, and away went the turkeys, outstripping the geese a hundred yards in a few minutes.

But gradually, as the sun went down, the turkeys desired to roost, and rushed through the hedges, first this side then the other, until they finally found some trees, in which they sought refuge, and all the efforts of the driver to get them on the road again were of no avail. All this time the geese kept going quietly along, and, like the tortoise with the hare in the fable, arrived at the goal whilst the turkeys were sleeping.

DESPONDENCY.—What right has any person, endowed with an ordinary share of intellect, and blessed with a respectful share of good health, to despond? What is the cause of despondency? What is the meaning of it? The cause is a weak mind, and the meaning is sin. Providence never intended that one of His creatures should be the victim of a desire to feel and look the gloom of the thunder-cloud. Never despond, for one of the first entrances of vice to the heart is made through the instrumentality of despondency. Although we cannot expect all our days and hours to be gilded by sunshine, we must not, for mere momentary griefs, suppose that they are to be enshrouded in the mists of misery, or clouded by the opacity of sorrow and misfortune.

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Hit again and strike me, Bill—hit me on the nose;
Think not of a rib to break, think but of the art;
Let me see quite clear again, do not let us close;
Come, let me get near to you, then the pair they'll part.

Bung'd up is one peeper, seeking not the light of day,
And from out the other on a blurring moisture drips;
We have but to fill the time until we share the pay;
Come again and hit me, do, hit me on the lips.

L. P.

The hangman takes life easily.

The band of hope—A life-belt.

Youthful warrior—A babe in arms.

Hearts are sometimes won with diamonds.

The most useful thing in the long run—Breath.

A pillow, though not belonging to the human species, comes under the head of a national belog.

Cholly: I weally love you more than any one in the world!

Penelope: You forget yourself.

The chickens don't deserve any particular credit for going to bed early; everything they can gobble goes to bed before they do.

Boarders in a downtown establishment recently complained to the landlady that the meat was so tough they couldn't chew the gravy.

"There are some things in this world I don't understand," said Bobby. "One of them is why small boys have such little stomachs and such large appetites."

"Suppose you wanted to propose marriage to a girl, Jack, what would you ask her first?"

"If we were alone."

Mr. Johnsing: Won't you join de game, Mistah Whiteside?

Mr. Whiteside: Not dis evening, Mistah Johnsing, I done left mah razor at home.

Mrs. Candour: Where did your poor Mr. Bjones die?

Mrs. Malaprop: The lawyers said he died intestate, wherever that is.

Fussy: Oh, if I could only have a dinner like those my dear old mother used to cook.

Mrs. Fussy: Well, it's a great pity that your dear old father never taught you how to carve.

Fuddy: You know there is no rule without an exception.

Duddy: I believe you. I never lay down a rule at the store but most of the clerks take exception to it.

Teacher: Where does milk come from?

Boy: I can't tell.

Teacher: Don't you know? Why, your father's a milkman.

Boy: Yes'm. He told me not to tell.

Brown: You look as if you had the blues?

Robinson: So I have. I've lost my beautiful new silk umbrella.

Brown: Where did you leave it?

Robinson: I didn't leave it anywhere. The owner met me and took it away from me.

Prudence is one of the virtues that naturally go with age, but sometimes it is developed early.

"Tommy," said a thoughtful mother, "your uncle William will be here to dinner to-day, and you must wash your face."

"Yes, ma," said the thrifty Thomas; "but s'posen he don't come. What then?"

A good old lady once said to her nephew, a poor preacher whom nobody wanted to hear, "James, why did you enter the ministry?"

"Because I was called," he answered.

"James," said the old lady anxiously, as she looked up from wiping her spectacles, "are you sure it wasn't some other noise you heard?"

A story is told of a servant girl brought to a cottage hospital suffering from the effects of an overdose of poison. When questioned as to her motive for taking it, she replied:

"I wasn't feeling well, and I went to my mistress' medicine-chest. This bottle was marked, 'Three drops for an infant, six for an adult, and a tablespoonful for an emetic.' I knew I wasn't an infant, I wasn't sure about an adult, so I thought I must be the emetic, and I took the spoonful."

A few nights ago the audience at a certain theatre was unusually small, and the manager was standing at the door disconsolately watching the crowds rush by. His unpleasant meditations were interrupted by a boy who had come from the gallery.

"Say, mister," he said, "can I, please, have a seat downstairs?"

"What's the matter?" asked the manager; "isn't the upstairs good enough for you?"

"Yes, sir; but I'm afraid to stay up there all alone."

BRIDESMAIDS.—Next to being a bride herself, every young lady likes to be a bride's maid. Wedlock is thought by a large proportion of the blooming sex to be contagious, and, much to the credit of their courage, fair spinsters are not at all afraid of catching it.

So far as official conduct is concerned, when you have seen one bridesmaid you have seen the whole fascinating tribe. Their leading duty seems to be to treat the bride as "a victim led with garlands to the sacrifice."

They consider it necessary to exhort her to "cheer up." Her fair assistants provide themselves with pungent essences, lest she should faint at the "trying moment," which, between you and me, she has no more idea of doing than she has of dying.

It is true she sometimes tells them that she "feels as if she should sink into the earth," and that they respond, "Poor dear!" and apply the smelling bottle; but she nevertheless goes through her nuptial martyrdom with great fortitude.

In nine cases out of ten the bridegroom is more "flustered" than the fragile and lovely creature at his side; but nobody thinks of pitying him, poor fellow!

If one of the groomsmen does recommend him to take a glass of wine before the ceremony, to steady his nerves, the advice is given superciliously—as who should say, "What a spoony you are, old fellow!"

Bridesmaids may be considered as brides in what lawyers call the "inchoate" or incipient state. They are looking forward to that day of triumphant weakness when it shall be their turn to be "poor, dear creatured," and otherwise sustained and supported, as the law of nuptial pretence directs. Let us hope they may not be disappointed.

WONDER WORKING PLANTS.—In a lecture on "Wonder-Working Plants," delivered recently at the London Institution, the lecturer, said that the cocoanut palm was the most beautiful plant that appeared in the Tropics, one of its characteristics being that it always leaned towards the wind.

Most palms had, he said, one stem only, although in some cases there were branches; but instances of the branch palm were very rare. In nearly every case branch palms were caused by the crushing of the terminal buds through a falling tree, etc., although cases had been known where the exuberance of growth had caused a fruit-bud to develop into a branch.

Many would be surprised to hear that pearls were found from time to time in cocoanuts, but such was a fact. The cocoanut pearl was almost exactly like that of the oyster, the only difference being that it was duller.

He spoke of a plant called a taste-spoiler, which, if its leaves were chewed, would cause sugar to become tasteless and sour things to lose all their sourness. Another remarkable fact was that, if horses fed on the leaves of the wild tamarind, they lost all the hair from their manes and tails. The cause of this was as yet unknown, but it was an undoubted fact.

A MAINE minister is seeking a divorce from his wife on the ground of cruelty and abuse.

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INSTANTANEOUS GUIDE TO THE PIANO OR ORGAN

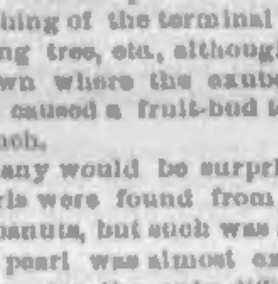
Anyone knowing a tune, say "Way Down on the Swanee River," either "in the head," as it is called, or able to hum, whistle or sing, can play it WITHOUT ANY PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE OF MUSIC, IMMEDIATELY correctly and with good effect, on the piano or organ, with the assistance of this GUIDE.

By giving the student the power to play IMMEDIATELY twelve tunes of different character—this number of pieces being sent with each Guide—after a very little practice with the Guide, it will be easy to pick out, any air or tune that may be heard or known.

The Guide will be sent to any address, all postage paid, on receipt of FIFTY CENTS. Postage stamps, 2's, taken. Address—

THE GUIDE MUSIC CO.,
726 Sansom St., Philadelphia, Pa.

Strange indeed that



A PLAIN THING like SAPOLIO should make everything so bright, but "A needle clothes others, and is itself naked." Try it in your next house-cleaning

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What folly it would be to cut grass with a pair of scissors! Yet people do equally silly things every day. Modern progress has grown up from the hooked sickle to the swinging scythe and thence to the lawn mower. So don't use scissors!

But do you use SAPOLIO? If you don't you are as much behind the age as if you cut grass with a dinner knife. Once there were no soaps. Then one soap served all purposes. Now the sensible folks use one soap in the toilet, another in the tub, one soap in the stables, and SAPOLIO for all scouring and house-cleaning.